Vol.....of.....vols. | cl... U.365

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

CENTRAL LIBRARY

High Street, Lewisham, S.E.13

CHARGE NUMBER..... B 819

The Public Libraries of the Borough of Lewisham are as follows;—

Reference Library, Lending Library and Newsrooms:
CENTRAL LIBRARY, High Street, Lewisham, S.E.13

Lending Library and Newsrooms:
FOREST HILL BRANCH, Dartmouth Road, S.E.23
MANOR HOUSE BRANCH,
SYDENHAM BRANCH,
BROCKLEY BRANCH,
HITHER GREEN BRA

The Lending Libraries are
employed within the boundaries o
are open for the issue and exchan
year from **10 a.m. to 8 p.m.**
Day, Good Friday and Bank H
of any special closing that may

Borrowers may obtain tickets at one
two tickets. Tickets may be used at an
book must be returned to the Library fr
be renewed annually. Books may be rese

A Borrower may retain a book for
home reading for 14 days; the date
last stamped upon the fly leaf within
the book cover is the last day upon
which it may be retained without
charge. Thereafter, a fine of TWO
PENCE shall be payable by the
Borrower for each week or part of a
week during which the book is
retained.

Books cannot be exchanged on the
day of issue, but otherwise no limit
is placed upon the frequency with
which a Borrower may make his
exchange.

No person shall take out of the Library any book for use in a house in which there is a person suffering from infectious disease. Should a case of infectious disease occur in a house, any inmate of which has borrowed a book from the Library, notice must at once be given by the Borrower to the Medical Officer of Health at the Town Hall, who will send for the book for the purpose of disinfection or destruction, as he may direct.

MSC
WILSON, Violet A.
Queen Elizabeth's
maids of honour
ladies
Chamber

Freame, Manning & Co., Ltd., Printers Lewisham.

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
LIBRARY SERVICE

Author

Title

BOOK STORE

Books or discs must be returned on or before the last date stamped on label or on card in book pocket. Books or discs can be renewed by telephone, letter or personal call unless required by another reader. After library hours use the Ansafone Service (01-698 7347). For hours of opening and charges see notices at the above branch, but note that all lending departments close at 1 pm on Wednesday and all libraries are closed on Sundays, Good Friday, Christmas Day, Bank Holidays

METROPOLITAN
SPECIAL COLLECTION

(1)-15/4/80

20. MAY 80

O/5883. Sch.

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S MAIDS OF HONOUR

Shakespeare Head Press Ltd., Stratford-upon-Avon

W. L. Colls Ph. Sc.

Mary Fytton.
Maid of Honour to Queen Elizabeth.
From a portrait at Arbury

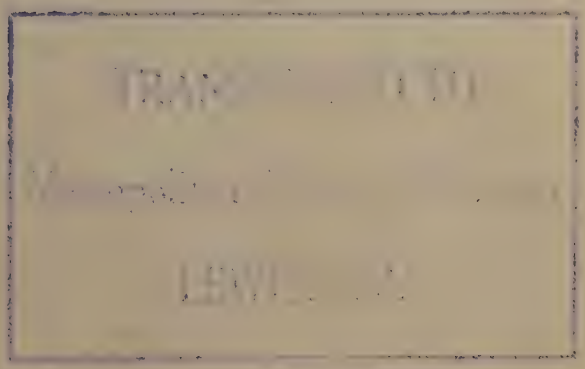
U 365.
941.055 : 3

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S MAIDS OF HONOUR

AND LADIES OF THE PRIVY CHAMBER

BY VIOLET A. WILSON

WITH TWELVE PORTRAITS



JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LIMITED
LONDON MCMXXII

LEWISHAM PUBLIC LIBRARIES.
CENTRAL LIBRARY.
STOCK No. 27673
SHELF No. B 819

LEWISHAM PUBLIC LIBRARIES
DISCARDED
A. H. Whittaker
Borough Librarian

REORGANISATION
Stock No. 942.055
Classification No. U 365

Printed in Great Britain at
The Mayflower Press, Plymouth. William Brendon & Son, Ltd.

ILLUSTRATIONS

MARY FITTON . . . . . *Frontispiece*
From a portrait at Arbury. By permission of Sir Francis Newdigate-Newdegate. (Photo, Shakespeare Head Press.)

Facing page

LADY CATHERINE GREY AND HER CHILD 20
From a portrait at Syon House. By permission of the Duke of Northumberland.

QUEEN ELIZABETH 44
From the portrait at Ditchley. By permission of Viscount Dillon. (Photo, Clarendon Press.)

QUEEN ELIZABETH DANCING WITH THE EARL OF LEICESTER . . 78
From a picture at Penshurst. By permission of Lord de L'Isle and Dudley. (Photo, "The Connoisseur.")

MARY SYDNEY, COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE 102
From a miniature in the Victoria and Albert Museum. By permission of the Duke of Buccleuch.

KATE CAREY, COUNTESS OF NOTTINGHAM 132
From a portrait by Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger. By permission of Major the Hon. Harold Pearson. (Photo, Messrs. Sotheby's.)

ELIZABETH HOWARD, LADY SOUTHWELL 144
From a portrait by Marcus Gheesaerts the Younger. By permission of Major the Hon. Harold Pearson. (Photo, Messrs. Sotheby's.)

ELIZABETH THROCKMORTON, LADY RALEIGH 172
From a portrait at Knole. By permission of Lord Sackville.

MARY RADCLYFFE 200
From a portrait at Thurso. By permission of Major Radclyffe.

ELIZABETH BRIDGES AS A GIRL OF FOURTEEN 220
From a portrait at Woburn Abbey. By permission of the Duke of Bedford.

ELIZABETH VERNON, COUNTESS OF SOUTHAMPTON 232
From a portrait at Boughton. By permission of the Duke of Buccleuch.

ANN RUSSELL, LADY HERBERT 258
From a portrait at Badminton. By permission of the Duke of Beaufort. (Photo, Walpole Society.)

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S MAIDS OF HONOUR

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S MAIDS OF HONOUR

CHAPTER I

QUEEN ELIZABETH once asked a French nobleman what he thought of her ladies. The visitor, an adroit courtier well skilled in the subtle art of flattery, refused to make any comment on them whatsoever, protesting his inability "to judge stars in the presence of the sun."[1] This answer pleased the Queen, and at the same time aptly defined the position occupied by her Maids of Honour, whose duty it was to set off their mistress's glory, but in no wise deflect it unto themselves.

Elizabeth, with true Tudor love of pageantry and colour, fully realized the spectacular value of a gorgeous setting, so that from the first she took care to surround herself with all the pomp and circumstance of splendid palaces, rich furniture, elaborate dresses and magnificent jewellery.

In this handsome background the Maids of Honour occupied a conspicuous and highly decorative place. Beautiful, well born, highly-educated girls, they were fitted both by birth and accomplishments to be the intimate companions of their royal mistress. Dressed in

[1] Sir Richard Baker's *Chronicle*, The Raigne of Elizabeth.

white and silver, they grouped themselves round the Queen, and were essentially a part of a well arranged picture designed for the enhancement of regal majesty. Unfortunately they evinced considerable disinclination to remain in the background, and individual stars twinkled so brightly that they seriously distracted the young courtiers from their rapt contemplation of the Elizabethan sun.

This propensity caused much trouble at Court, entailing hard words, frequently accompanied by still harder blows from the royal hand for the delinquent Maids of Honour, whilst their luckless admirers had ample time for reflection or repentance during the constraints of imprisonment.

The ladies' conduct appeared the more reprehensible in the Queen's eyes from the fact that she constantly extolled the superior merits of virginity, and sought to impregnate them with her own aversion to matrimony. Discoursing at large on the subject which formed a constant theme in the privy chamber, Elizabeth would ask the girls for their opinion. The Maids of Honour with well simulated aversion unhesitatingly professed adhorrence of the wiles of wilful men, declaring thoughts of marriage never so much as entered their heads. After which sentiments they promptly embroiled themselves in the labyrinths of intricate love affairs.

At the age of twenty-five Elizabeth had little to fear from comparison with other women, for various chroniclers testified to her good looks.

"She was a lady of great beauty, of decent stature, and of an excellent shape. In her youth she was adorned with

more than usual maiden modesty; her skin was pure white, and her hair of a yellow colour; her eyes were beautiful and lovely. In short, her whole body was well made, and her face was adorned with a wonderful beauty and majesty."[1]

Her admirer claimed that she had all the virtues belonging to both sexes, without the faults considered peculiar to her own, save "a little unsteadiness in her will"; another opinion "she had more valour in her than was fit for a woman."[2]

Besides physical beauty—by which she set great store—Elizabeth possessed clever brains, shrewd judgment and nimble wit, with considerable powers of acumen, which stood her in good stead through her long reign. Her mind, too, had been well trained, for in Tudor times education was a solid matter laid down on the same lines for men and women. Learning of all kinds had come to be held in high esteem, for knowledge—no longer shut up in the monasteries—spread its enlightening influence throughout the land, awaking fresh desires, and thrusting aside the baffling ignorance of mediæval times.

It was an age pre-eminent of romance, a world electric with portents of fresh discoveries; new lands were being sought for, new ventures undertaken, new inventions perfected, new luxuries coming into general use. Printed books, though few at first, rapidly increased, being read with avidity by men and women alike, eager to avail themselves of the splendid future which lay before them.

Elizabeth appointed a librarian at Whitehall Palace,

[1] Bohun's *Character of Queen Elizabeth.*

[2] Sir R. Baker's *Chronicle.*

and under his charge the shelves quickly filled with books of the time. These were especially bound in coloured velvet, stamped in gold with the Queen's Arms, and the clasps encrusted with precious stones. Foreign literature, also, was well represented, the Queen being an exceptionally clever linguist. She not only read but spoke various tongues with fluent accuracy, could address the universities in Greek, trounce a malapert ambassador in vigorous Latin, or fish for compliments with equal facility in French, Italian or Spanish.

Clever herself, Elizabeth had no patience with stupidity, but liked to surround herself with people whose quick brains were attuned to her own. The Maids of Honour were famous for their accomplishments: they spoke several languages, were good musicians, clever needlewomen, graceful dancers, and proficient horsewomen. Nor were they behindhand in domestic pursuits, being ever ready to try their hands at cookery when the Palace cooks, usually "musical headed Frenchmen," could be prevailed on to demonstrate the mysteries appertaining to sugar-plate, kissing comfits, gingerbreads, sugar meats, or the most delectable confectionery known as marchpane.[1]

From their nearness to the Queen's person, the Maids of Honour were objects of solicitude to the courtiers, who pressed, and not infrequently bribed them to further their suits with the Queen. Sometimes they were successful, often they were not; so much depended on the nature of the favour sought, the personality of the suitor, the influence of the lady, and the caprice of the Queen.

[1] "Save me a piece of marchpane," *Romeo and Juliet*, I, 5.

Courtiers differed in their estimation of this method of gaining the royal ear; many regarding the ladies' help as indispensable, whilst others declared ungallantly that "like witches, they could do hurt, but they could do no good."[1]

Elizabeth did not encourage the ladies to meddle in political matters when she had withdrawn with them to her own apartments and wished to forget the cares of State. She was, however, by no means averse to anything in the nature of gossip, and so well did the ladies keep their mistress supplied with all the current scandal that Sir William Cecil[2] and other members of the Council were frequently chagrined to find the Queen intimately acquainted with matters of which they had fondly hoped to keep her in ignorance.

On ascending the throne in 1558, Elizabeth, when making choice of the ladies of her privy chamber, did not forget those friends who had stood by her in the dark days of Queen Mary's reign, when she was but a doubtfully legitimate princess whose head sat very insecurely on her shoulders. Elizabeth's former governess and closest confidante, Mrs. Ashley, who had suffered imprisonment for devotion to her pupil's cause, received an honourable appointment in the household, whilst Mrs. Blanche Parry[3], who had rocked the little princess in her cradle, became chief gentlewoman of the privy chamber and keeper of Her Majesty's jewels.

Mistress Blanche loved to dabble in the dark mysteries

[1] Bacon's *Apophthegms*.

[2] Principal Secretary, afterwards created Lord Burleigh.

[3] d. of Henry Parry, of Newcourt, Herefordshire. "Mrs." was the usual prefix for unmarried ladies.

of the occult, and was a great crony of Dr. John Dee, the Mortlake astronomer, who through her influence was instructed to consult the stars in their courses and fix an auspicious day for the Queen's coronation.

Blanche Parry made a special study of palmistry, and on long winter evenings when the curtains were drawn and the wood fire crackled cheerfully in the big open hearth, the girls brought gay-hued cushions and sat round "Mrs. Blanche," stretching out their slim hands for her to tell their fortunes. If the palmist read the lines truly she must needs have prevaricated, for fate held hard things in store for several of the merry, light-hearted girls.

When Lady Catherine Grey's[1] turn came, Mrs. Parry, with full knowledge of the girl's difficult position from her nearness to the throne, took opportunity to convey a timely warning, saying gravely, "The lines say, madam, that if you ever marry without the Queen's consent in writing, you and your husband will be undone, and your fate worse than that of my Lady Jane."

Lady Catherine and her elfish little sister, Lady Mary, though treated just the same as the other girls, were in point of fact very differently situated, for if Elizabeth died without issue they stood next in the succession. Henry VIII, in his will, left the crown in rotation to his own children, Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth, and after them to his younger sister, Mary, the ex-Queen of France[2], thus passing over the claim of his elder sister, Margaret,

[1] d. of Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk.

[2] m., 1st, Louis XII; 2ndly, Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. Two daughters. Frances m. Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk, and was the mother of the Ladies Jane, Catherine, and Mary Grey.

Queen of Scotland.[1] This deposition caused endless dissension: it made the three Grey sisters the centre of intrigue; caused the death of the eldest, Lady Jane, the nine days' Queen, and created two rival parties who supported the claims of the Greys or their cousin, Mary Queen of Scots.

Elizabeth loved her young relatives not at all, but she deemed it politic to give them posts in the privy chamber, where they would be directly under her very vigilant eye. Lady Catherine, small, red-haired, with a spice of Tudor temper which flared up and frequently got her into trouble with the Queen, regarded the position of Maid of Honour as derogatory to her rank. She, however, found consolation in the fact that it gave her the close companionship of her greatest friend, Lady Jane Seymour, another of the Maids.

Lady Jane's ambitious father, the Protector Somerset,[2] had schemed to marry her to the boy King Edward VI, and would probably have done so had not his enemies caused that and many other cherished plans to go awry, and himself to expiate his offences on Tower Hill.

Lady Jane, a clever delicate girl, had the reputation of being one of the most learned ladies of the day. At ten years old she had, with her two elder sisters, written "four hundred Latin distich's upon the death of the Queen of Navarre."[3] This display of erudition did not

[1] Eldest d. of Henry VII; m. James IV of Scotland; her son, James V, was the father of Mary, Queen of Scots.

[2] Edward Seymour, 1st Earl of Hertford and Duke of Somerset, beheaded 1552.

[3] Ballard's *Eminent Ladies*.

mark Lady Jane as one apart from the other Maids of Honour, for at Court she laid aside her youthful precocity, and though still fond of books, devoted much time to music and singing, whilst when occasion offered, she displayed great activity as a match-maker.

Other Maids of Honour were Ann Russell,[1] Katherine Knevett,[2] and five of the Queen's young kinswomen, Kate and Philadelphia Carey,[3] Lettice and Cecilia Knollys,[4] and Mary Howard,[5] of whom Richard Edwards[6] of the Chapel Royal, wrote in estimation:

> "Howarde is not haughte
> But of such smylinge cheare
> That wolde alure eche gentill harte
> His love to holde full dere."

The bright-eyed Maids of Honour led a gay life consequent on their attendance on a vivacious young Queen whose youth and beauty, combined with a memory of her past sufferings, fired the imagination, whilst it quickened the love of her people.

At tilts and tourneys young men, aglow with ardour, burned to distinguish themselves in the eyes of such a mistress. One valiant courtier, Sir Henry Lee, openly

[1] d. of Francis, 2nd Earl of Bedford.

[2] d. of Henry Knevett, of Buckenham, Norfolk.

[3] d.'s of Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon, whose mother, Mary Boleyn, was a sister of Ann Boleyn.

[4] d.'s of Sir Francis Knollys and his wife, Catherine Carey, daughter of Mary Boleyn.

[5] d. of William, 1st Baron Howard of Effingham, the Queen's grand-uncle.

[6] Richard Edwards, poet and playwright, master of the children of the Chapel Royal, died 1566.

dedicated himself the Queen's own champion, solemnly making a vow that he would tilt yearly in her honour till the dim obscurity of old age rendered him incapable of martial exercise.

The good citizens of London were every whit as anxious to show their loyalty as the courtiers at Westminster, and received the Queen with acclamations of joy whenever she appeared among them.

One soft April evening when the silvery Thames rippled invitingly between its banks, Elizabeth with her retinue entered the gilded State barge manned by liveried oarsmen, and rowed up towards the city. Snowy plumaged swans followed in its wake, as the barge glided past the green fields and lovely gardens lying between Westminster and London.

The Thames watermen congregated at the public stairs, spread news of the Queen's approach, and very soon reaped rich harvest from eager sightseers all anxious to catch a glimpse of their young Queen as she passed slowly along.

> "The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
> Burn'd on the water; the poop was beaten gold,
> Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
> The winds were love-sick with them, the oars were silver,
> Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
> The water which they beat to follow faster,
> As amorous of their strokes."[1]

[1] *Antony and Cleopatra*, II, 2. Shakespeare, when writing this description of a State barge, doubtless had in mind the one used by Queen Elizabeth, and which he must often have seen on the Thames.

Court musicians played with a will, but their efforts were quite outdone in volume by the loyal citizens, who despite their haste had thoughtfully provided themselves with whatsoever noise producing instruments came first to hand. With extreme vigour did they perform on drums, trumpets and flutes, their efforts being augmented by the ringing of church bells, discharge of cannon, to say nothing of squibs hurled into the air by exuberant youngsters.

Grey evening purpled into dusk, the lights of London twinkled up at the stars above, but not till ten o'clock did the royal barge return to Whitehall, where Sergeant-porter Keyes, keeper of the watergate, awaited it with his men and torch-bearers.

Lord Robert Dudley,[1] master of the horse, handed out the Queen, whilst less privileged courtiers offered eager assistance to the Maids of Honour. The girls gathered their wraps round them as they walked through the Palace garden, where the scent of pale spring flowers hung in the air, and the earth seemed throbbing with the insistent vitality that pulsates through the nights of early spring.

Laughing and chattering together, the young people were loath to go indoors, but the "mother of the maids," a discreet chaperon responsible for her charges' good behaviour, would allow no loitering, and indoors the girls had to go.

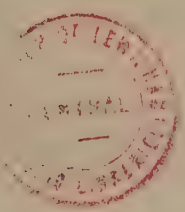
[1] Robert Dudley, afterwards Earl of Leicester, fifth son of John, Duke of Northumberland, and brother of Lord Guildford Dudley, the husband of Lady Jane Grey.

Their "mother" might see her charges safely indoors, or even up to their own dormitory, but once there she held no jurisdiction over their lively tongues. The girls always had plenty to talk about, and enlivened the process of hair-brushing with comments on the day's happenings, and the progress of their own particular love affairs.

Their next door neighbour, grave Sir Francis Knollys[1], found the noise made by his daughters and their friends well-nigh distracting, for "the Mayds of Honour used to frisk and hey about in the next room to his extreme disquiete at nights, though he had often warned them of it; at last he getts one to bolt their own backe door, when they were all in one night at their revells, stripps to his shirt, and so with a payre of spectacles on his nose, and Aretine in his hand, come marching in at the posterne doore of his own chamber, reading very gravely, full upon the faces of them. Now let the reader judge what a sadd spectacle a pittifull fright these poor creatures endur'd, for he faced them and often travest the roome in this posture about an hour."[2]

[1] Sir Francis Knollys, Privy Councillor and Vice-Chamberlain. Treasurer of the royal household 1572–96.

[2] Thoms's *Anecdotes and Traditions.*



CHAPTER II

NO matter what time they went to bed the Maids of Honour had to be up betimes next morning, for immediately after six o'clock breakfast they attended the Queen as she walked in the garden. It was Elizabeth's hour of relaxation before Ministers arrived to consult about State affairs, and she made the most of it, laughing or talking with her ladies as they paced the palace grounds.

The garden at Whitehall was a pleasurable place in summer; broad paths ran between dew-spangled lawns broken by trim flower-beds, fantastically clipped bushes, and tall gilded columns surmounted by grotesquely carved beasts. In the middle of the garden stood a sundial, openly remarkable for the fact that it told the time in thirty different ways. It also possessed a thirty-first claim to notoriety which made much mirth for the mischievous Maids of Honour. With extreme willingness they offered to show strangers the sundial, and whilst the visitors with puckered brows strove to define the hour by any one of its thirty devices, the girls suddenly turned on a concealed hose, adroitly contrived to give anyone standing by the sundial an impromptu shower-bath. The trick could only be played once, but with so many strangers coming and going at Whitehall, the ladies were rarely at loss for a victim.

Foreign Ambassadors arrived with much pomp, their portfolios filled with matrimonial projects, till it seemed as if all the eligible princes in Europe were anxious to

make offer of their hands and hearts to the fair young Queen of England. Elizabeth heard them graciously, feasted them royally, showed them the sights of London, and the treasures of her palaces; inclined a highly appreciative ear to their facile flattery of her unparalleled charms, but remained obdurately deaf to marriage proposals.

To entertain the visitors, Elizabeth arranged a ballet to be performed by the Maids of Honour, representing the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, as depicted in a set of tapestry hangings which adorned one of the State rooms at Greenwich Palace.

The girls entered whole-heartedly into the idea, but at rehearsals they found their mistress hard to please. Seated on a chair in the privy chamber she watched with critical eyes as the "Virgins" practised their steps. In no gentle terms did she chide when they made mistakes; over and over again would she rehearse the difficult parts, till the girls were ready to drop with weariness. Elizabeth's own nimble feet beat a tattoo to the music, and often, descending from her seat, she lifted her farthingale to display a trim pair of ankles as she enacted the part of dancing mistress.

At length the eventful evening arrived, and to the distinguished visitors it seemed as if the glowing tapestry had suddenly come to life, when in glided the wise and foolish virgins swinging richly chased silver lamps. At the conclusion of the ballet, the performers approached the royal dais to entreat the Queen and her guests to join in the subsequent revels.

Throughout all this gaiety there were many under-

currents, for Kate Carey, Lettice Knollys, Ann Russell and Katerine Knevett all had secret, but progressive, love affairs of great interest to themselves, but of less momentous consequence to the State than that of Lady Catherine Grey.

So long as Elizabeth refused to marry or name a successor—and the very mention of either threw her into a paroxysm of rage—Lady Catherine, though neglected and kept in the background, was the next heir to the throne. The ambiguity of her position made marriage proposals a gamble at which self-interested suitors fought shy. If the lady brought the crown of England as a dowry, she would be a rich prize, but should Queen Elizabeth marry, then the husband of Lady Catherine might find himself in a difficult, if not acutely dangerous, position.

The Earl of Pembroke, who had caused his son to be affianced to Lady Catherine on the same day that Lord Guildford Dudley married Lady Jane Grey, judged discretion to be the better part of valour, and repudiated the contract.

Philip of Spain, who wished to retain a hold on England by marrying his sister-in-law, Queen Elizabeth, instructed his ambassador to keep in touch with Lady Catherine, for, if the former project failed, he entertained the idea of kidnapping her. Sir Thomas Challoner, the English ambassador, hearing rumours of this design, wrote thus to warn Sir William Cecil.

"King Philip is so jealous of the anticipated power of France, by the alliance of young Francis the Dauphin with the Queen of Scotland, and her claim to the crown

of England that he positively contemplates stealing Lady Catherine Grey out of the realm, and marrying her to his son, Don Carlos, or some other member of his family, and setting up her title against that of Mary Stuart, as the true heiress of England. Lady Catherine will probably be glad to go, being most uncomfortably situated in the English Court with the Queen, who cannot well abide the sight of her, neither the duchess her mother[1] nor her stepfather love her, and her uncle cannot abide to hear of her so she lives as it were in great despair. She has spoken very arrogant and unseemly words in the hearing of the Queen and others standing by. Hence it is thought that she could be enticed away if some trusty person were to speak with her."[2]

Count de Feria, the Spanish Ambassador, so far made interest with Lady Catherine that she promised not to marry anyone without first consulting him, but when the right man appeared she threw promises and prudence alike to the winds.

The romance began at Hanworth, the home of the Duchess of Somerset, Lady Jane Seymour's mother. Lady Jane having been ill, went there to recover, taking with her her great friend, Lady Catherine Grey. In the beautiful old garden at Hanworth, the two girls spent a happy summer, not lessened, for either of them, by the presence of Lady Jane's brother, Edward.[3]

[1] Lady Frances Brandon, after the execution of her first husband, Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk, married her equerry, Mr. Adrian Stokes.

[2] *Calendar of State Papers.* Foreign. 1560.

[3] Edward Seymour, son of Protector Somerset by his second wife, Anne Stanhope, educated with Edward VI. Created Earl of Hertford 1559.

The young man had a natural interest in Lady Catherine, for in childhood their ambitious fathers had planned a marriage between the two families. Now that they were grown up and the match no more spoken of, both felt they could have obeyed their parents' wishes without disinclination.

A year or two later when the girls were at Court, and the Earl of Hertford in residence at his house in Cannon Row, Westminster, he contrived to see a good deal of Lady Catherine. The intimacy ripened during an autumn progress into Kent, when the Queen paid a visit to Lady Cobham, her Mistress of the Robes, at Cobham Hall, where "her Grace was welcomed with great chear."

The Earl of Hertford returned to London with his mind made up, and he entreated his sister to find out if Lady Catherine felt favourably disposed towards him. Lady Jane readily undertook the task, and subsequently arranged a meeting in her own private sitting-room, which opened out of the larger one used by the Maids of Honour.

The Earl of Hertford professed his love; Lady Catherine demurely admitted "that she liked both him and his offer, and thereupon they gave one to the other their hands."[1]

Lady Frances Brandon's consent had to be obtained next, so the Earl of Hertford rode over to Sheen to "ask her good will that he might marry the Lady Catherine, her daughter."

Personally, Lady Frances had no objection, for she

[1] *Harleian MS.* 6286.

liked the Earl of Hertford, and judged that Lady Catherine would have more chance of happiness married to the man she loved than wedded to a foreign prince who would use her for the furtherance of his own ambition. At the same time, both she and Adrian Stokes foresaw that difficulties might arise from Lady Catherine's nearness to the succession, and after the tragedy which had befallen Lady Jane Grey, they feared to run any risk. Before matters went further they insisted that the Queen's consent must be asked, though this all concerned were aware would be by no means an easy matter. The Earl of Hertford quailed at the thought of a personal interview with Elizabeth, and fully concurred with Adrian Stokes, that a carefully worded letter would be more likely to put the matter in a better light than the halting explanations of a nervous young man confronted by his liege majesty in full tornado of Tudor wrath.

The momentous letter was drafted, altered, and rewritten, but never sent, for before it satisfied all parties Lady Frances fell dangerously ill and died.

Her death proved a heavy blow to the lovers, who had counted so much on her assistance, and now knew not where to turn. In Lady Jane's little sitting-room overlooking Whitehall gardens, the three conspirators discussed the situation in all its bearings, but found no cause for comfort therein.

At length they could bear the strain no longer; seeing no hope of gaining the Queen's consent to their union, they decided to do without it, and marry secretly at the first opportunity. A dare-devil resolve, as they very well

knew, but they were young and in love, with a hope in the future strong though unsupported.

Some time elapsed before the plan could be carried out, but one day when the Queen announced her intention of going to Eltham for a few days' hunting, they knew their chance had come. The other girls overhauled their riding apparel, speculating the while as to who would go and who stay behind, whilst the conspirators racked their brains for excuses to avoid being chosen for the hunting party. Lady Jane, always delicate, was fairly safe, but Lady Catherine, being by no means secure, resorted to feigned toothache. Bitterly did she complain of the pain and, the more to advertise her distressful condition, tied up a supposedly swollen cheek in a large pocket handkerchief.

The ruse succeeded, and half an hour after the Queen's departure from Whitehall Lady Catherine and Lady Jane slipped unobserved out of the Palace. They hastened through the deserted gardens towards the river steps at the bottom of the orchard, avoiding the watergate lest Sergeant Keyes, always a friend of the younger Court ladies, should offer embarrassing assistance.

It was a dull November morning, with low-lying clouds drifting across a leaden sky; a grey river running sluggishly between mud-banks, whereon flocks of long-necked swans preened their snowy plumage.

The two girls lifted their skirts as they hurried along, their shoes squelching in the mud which oozed up between the pebble-strewn beach connecting Whitehall and Westminster.

Coll. of the Duke of Northumberland

LADY CATHERINE GREY AND HER CHILD

At length they reached Cannon Row and, climbing up the green-slimed stairs at the bottom of the Earl of Hertford's garden, hastened towards the house, letting themselves in by the kitchen door.

The Earl of Hertford, in preparation for the wedding, had sent his servants abroad on different errands; he had bought the ring, and provided refreshments, but he had quite overlooked the fact that even for the most secret wedding a clergyman of one denomination or another is an actual necessity.

Lady Jane noticed the omission at once, and realizing that lovers are inconsequent people to deal with, hurried off in search of a priest. One she found, short, elderly, and wearing a fur-trimmed black gown, and him she brought back with all speed to Cannon Row.

The ceremony took place in a large upper chamber, the clergyman standing with his back to the big, mullioned window; the bride and bridegroom before him, and Lady Jane officiating as bridesmaid.

The five-pieced ring which the Earl of Hertford placed on Lady Catherine's finger had engraved on it the words:

"As circles five by art compact, shewe but one ring in sight
So trust unieth faithfull mindes, with knott of secret might.
Whose force to break but greedie death no wight posseth power.
As tyme and sequele well shall prove, my ring can saie noe more."

Lady Jane gave the priest ten pounds for his trouble, and warned the newly-married pair that it would not do to tarry much longer, lest Mrs. Ashley, who remained in charge during the Queen's absence, should ask inconvenient questions.

As the tide had risen, the girls could not walk back, so the Earl of Hertford called one of his watermen to row them up to Whitehall. They reached the Palace in plenty of time to change their muddy things before dinner, when they took their places at the comptroller's table without anyone having a suspicion of what had taken place.

A few days later the Queen returned from her hunting expedition, and during the usual round of gaiety the Earl of Hertford and Lady Catherine were constantly together.

They shared a common anxiety, too, for Lady Jane's health became gradually worse, so that Elizabeth, with whom she was a favourite, allowed her to absent herself from many of her duties as Maid of Honour. The two whose interests were so bound up with hers spent all the time they could with the sick girl. Sitting round the fire the three made many plans, which, viewed in the golden haze of the future, seemed feasible enough compared with the hard reality of the present, with the fear of the Queen's anger shadowing their young lives.

Lady Jane always seemed so bright and cheerful that those around her failed to realize the seriousness of the disease which day by day drew her back into the shadows, till on the 20th of March, 1561, the wings of death suddenly closed over her.

The Queen and all the ladies of the privy chamber took the girl's death bitterly to heart, and two hundred mourners, including all the Maids of Honour, followed the funeral procession to Westminster Abbey, where Lady Jane was buried in St. Edmund's Chapel.

The Earl of Hertford raised a monument to the memory of his favourite sister with an inscription in verse:

"ON THE DEATH OF LADY JANE SOMERSET

For genius fam'd, for beauty lov'd:
Jane bade the world admire:
Her voice harmonious notes improv'd,
Her hand the tunefull lyre.
Venus and Pallas claim'd this maid,
Each as her right alone,
But death superior pow'r display'd
And seiz'd her as his own.
Her virgin dust this mournfull tomb,
In kindred Earth contains
Her soul which Fate can ne'er consume
In endless glory reigns."[1]

[1] Haddon's *Poems*. These verses have now disappeared and only a tablet on the wall remains to the memory of Lady Jane Seymour.

CHAPTER III

LADY CATHERINE was lonely and fearful, for her secret, just bearable when shared with sympathetic Lady Jane, seemed almost too heavy to be borne alone. Her sister Mary was too young, and the only living things to whom she could whisper the great event in her life were to the uncomprehending ears of her pets. Of these Lady Catherine had many; her room at Court seemed full of animals, little spaniels curled up on the rush-strewn floor, silky-coated Maltese snugly asleep on cushions, white-whiskered marmosets chattering on their mistress's coffer-chest at the opinionated parrot who called raucous attention to "Poor Poll."

To make matters worse, Elizabeth ordered the Earl of Hertford abroad, and from her mandate there could be no appeal. The Court being at Greenwich, husband and wife contrived a stolen meeting in the orchard, and as they paced the pleached alleys whose interwoven stems and foliage screened them from curious eyes, Lady Catherine whispered a fear, not yet become a certainty, that the future might hold something which would make an open avowal of their marriage imperative.

The Earl comforted her as best he could, promising to return at once if she sent word that she needed him. They were both so young, and but for Lady Catherine's nearness to the throne, they might have been so happy. As it was the world seemed hard, with Lady Frances and Lady Jane snatched away by death, and the Queen's jealousy of Lady Catherine daily increasing, so that there

appeared every likelihood of their position becoming worse instead of better. If only Elizabeth would have married one of her numerous suitors all might be well, but she showed no disposition to do anything of the kind. Foreign princes were played off one against the other with consummate skill, and the Maids of Honour speculated freely among themselves as to what might have happened if Lord Robert Dudley had not possessed an inconvenient wife[1] hidden away in Oxfordshire.

Kate Carey knew more of Elizabeth's mind than anyone except Mrs. Ashley, for the cousins were close friends. One bright summer day, when walking together in Greenwich Park, they came, either by accident or design, upon Lord Robert Dudley and Lord Windsor at a shooting match. The ladies watched the sport for some time, but their presence occasioned more compliments than shots, so that a watchful onlooker, taking note of the Queen's open flirtation with Lord Robert, wrote significantly to Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, the Queen's Ambassador to France, "it seemeth his favour began but now."

On June 4th, 1561, the spell of fine weather broke, for soon after eleven o'clock the sky clouded over, and heavy drops of rain sent the ladies and courtiers who were in the park scurrying back to the Palace for shelter.

The rain proved the forerunner of a terrific storm: thunder vibrated overhead, whilst streaks of forked lightning lit up the darkened hall where the Court sat at

[1] Amy Robsart, died at Cumnor under suspicious circumstances in 1566.

dinner. Pale-faced Maids of Honour, quaking on their joint-stools,[1] made pretence of eating, and durst not look upon their steel knives.

It took more than a thunderstorm to frighten Elizabeth, who after dinner called her unwilling ladies to come and watch the lightning from the gallery windows. The storm seemed to have concentrated over London, where lowering clouds hung like an ink pall over the city. Rain and hail fell in torrents whilst wickedly flickering lightning cut the heavy clouds, followed by such terrific thunder-claps that the Maids of Honour expected every moment to see a fire ball come down the chimney.

Greenwich Palace escaped, but St. Paul's Cathedral was struck, and soon the onlookers saw a thin column of smoke issue from the tall steeple. Courtiers called for boats and were rowed in all haste to London; sailors hastened up from the ships lying in the docks; willing citizens formed chains to pass buckets of water from the river; all worked with a will, but before the flames could be subdued the spire, roof and bells had been destroyed.

A month after this calamity the Queen started forth on a progress through the eastern counties. Most of the Maids of Honour looked forward to the expedition, but Lady Catherine went about her preparations with heavy hearted foreboding of coming trouble. At first all went well, the Queen's loyal county of Essex gave her a warm welcome, whilst the Corporation of Colchester feasted

[1] Wooden stools used by all classes at meals and stored under the long table at other times. "Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool," *King Lear*, III, 6.

the visitors on oysters to their very great contentment. At Ipswich, however, things began to go wrong: the clergy were the chief offenders, for, though fully desirous to please, everything they did proved unsatisfactory. Elizabeth found fault with the way they conducted the services, scolded them for marrying, and even the Bishop of Norwich shared in the general reprimand on the score that he "winked at schismatics."

In short, Elizabeth worked herself up into a state of irritability which reacted on a highly nervous Court, engaged like Agag in walking delicately, lest peradventure one of its members should enact the uncongenial part of scapegoat.

At this unpropitious moment Lady Catherine Grey revealed the story of her secret marriage. For a confidante she chose an old friend of her mother's—Lady Seintlow[1], one of the women of the bedchamber. Both Lady Catherine and Lady Mary had been bridesmaids at her first wedding, but Lady Seintlow had no memory of this when the former came into her room, and with tears confessed that she was married to the Earl of Hertford, and about to become a mother.

Lady Seintlow railed and upbraided Lady Catherine with much bitterness for making her the recipient of such a highly dangerous secret, till the frightened girl fled back to her own quarters. All night long she lay sleepless, tossing to and fro on her bed, hearing the monotonous

[1] "Bess of Hardwick" m., 1st, Sir Robert Barlow; 2ndly, Sir William Cavendish; 3rdly, Sir William St. Low, Captain of the Guard; 4thly, George Talbot, 6th Earl of Shrewsbury; d. 1608.

chant of the night watchman as he called his round, coupled with the admonition:

> "Look to your candle, your fire and your lock.
> Prevent what may through ignorance arise."

Next morning heavy-eyed Lady Catherine guessed, from the curious looks cast in her direction, that Lady Seintlow had revealed her secret to the other ladies, though neither she nor they would risk repeating it to the Queen in her present mood.

Yet told Elizabeth must be, and Lady Catherine determined to appeal to no less a person than Lord Robert Dudley, the now all-powerful favourite. He also was an old friend of the Grey family, for his brother Guildford had married Catherine's elder sister, Lady Jane.

Lord Robert attended so closely on the Queen that Lady Catherine could find no opportunity to speak to him during the day, but at night when all was quiet she crept along the darkened passages till she reached the room he occupied next door to the Queen.

The Master of the Horse awoke with a start to find Lady Catherine Grey kneeling by his bed sobbing out her confession and entreating his intercession with the Queen. Lord Robert's first concern was for self-preservation; if Elizabeth should overhear Lady Catherine, in very dire trouble would he find himself next morning, favourite or no favourite. Earnestly he besought the girl to return to her room, being ready to promise anything if she would only go and release him from such an embarrassing situation.

Lord Robert, though misliking the task, told the Queen next morning, when the result fully justified Lady Seintlow's apprehensions. Coming on the top of the clerical offences and delinquent bishop, Elizabeth's anger knew no bounds, the more so because it was founded on fear, for if Lady Catherine gave birth to a son her claim to the succession would be materially strengthened.

The whole Court fell under a ban of suspicion, Lady Seintlow coming in for special condemnation for not having revealed the matter directly it came to her knowledge. To the Tower should Lady Catherine go that very afternoon, and an express messenger went forward with a letter to a lieutenant of the Tower, telling him of his expected prisoner, coupled with instructions for her treatment.

"From the Queene's Majestie to Mr. Warner, Lieutenant of the Tower, 17th August, 1560.

"Trusty and welbeloved, we grete yow well. Our pleasure is, that ye shall, as by our commandment, examyn the Lady Catherine very streightly, how many hath bene privyee to the love betwixt the Erle of Hertford and hir from the begynning; and lett hir certenly understand that she shall have no manner of Favor, except she will show the truth, not only what Ladys and Gentillwomen of this court wer therto privee, but also what Lords and Gentillmen: For it doth now appere that sondry Personages have delt herin; and when it shall appeare more manifestly, it shall increase our indignation agynst hir, if she will forebeare to utter it. We ernestly requyre yow to bestow your Diligence in this. Ye shall also send to Alderman Lodge secretly for Seintlow, and shall put hir in awe of divers matters

confessed by the Lady Catharyn, and also deale with hir, that she may confess to yow all hir knoledge in the same matters. It is certayne that there hath bene great practises and purposes, and sence the Death of the Lady Jane, she hath been most privee. And as ye shall see occasion so ye may keep Seintlow two or three nights more or less, and let hir be restorned to Lodges or kept still with yow, as ye shall think mete. We have signed a Licence for your absence but we wold that ye shuld forbeare for a fortnight and not to depart untill also our pleasure be further signified."[1]

Despite his postponed holiday, Sir Edward Warner did the best he could in preparation for his expected prisoner. The Tower resources in the way of furniture were not large, but he contrived to find a few pieces of tapestry to hang on the stone walls; a common bedstead covered with a red and gold quilt; a crimson velvet chair, and two green footstools which Henry VIII had used as rests for his gouty feet.

Lady Catherine, when she arrived travel-stained and weary, regarded these faded relics of past splendour with lack-lustre eyes. In her nervous, highly-strung condition, imprisonment in the grim fortress wherein her sister Lady Jane Grey had been beheaded seemed the culminating point of wretchedness.

The girl's friends, though not daring to show their sympathy openly, did not forget her, but made interest with Sir Edward Warner, that his prisoner might have the companionship of the pets she loved so dearly. Being a kind-hearted man he readily agreed, and one day as

[1] Murdin's *State Papers*.

Lady Catherine sat dejectedly in her cell, the door opened to admit a number of little dogs and monkeys, who leapt exuberantly on their mistress, and in the warmth of their affection she felt less forlorn.

The Earl of Hertford had received a peremptory summons to return to England at once, and no sooner did he set foot in his native land than he was arrested and forthwith clapped into the Tower.

Husband and wife met under sorrowful circumstances; they were examined and cross-examined, till all the details of their courtship and marriage became public property. In the midst of the proceedings Lady Catherine became ill, and on September 24th she clasped her first-born son[1] in her arms.

The young mother remained weak and languid, till Sir Edward Warner, if he did not actually sanction it, certainly contrived opportunities for the Earl of Hertford to visit his wife. These meetings brightened the dreary anxious lives of the two prisoners, who played with their baby boy and made plans for the future, if it should ever please the Queen to relent towards them.

Unfortunately, the birth of a second son[2] fanned Elizabeth's wrath. The Earl of Hertford appeared before the Star-chamber, was fined £15,000, both his children

[1] Edward Seymour, Lord Beauchamp, 1561–1612. In 1595 the Earl of Hertford was again imprisoned for having taken steps to establish the validity of his marriage with Lady Catherine Grey and the consequent legitimacy of his sons.

[2] Thomas, born Feb., 1562–3, when two of the Tower warders stood godfathers, died 8 Aug., 1600.

declared illegitimate, and all further meetings between husband and wife sternly prohibited.

During an outbreak of the plague, urgent representations were made for the removal of the two prisoners from the insalubrious neighbourhood of the Tower. Elizabeth would not have been inconsolable if the plague had claimed the whole family, though she grudgingly gave orders for their removal: the Earl of Hertford to the charge of his mother at Hanworth, and Lady Catherine of her uncle, Lord John Grey.

Imprisonment had told sorely on the young mother, and when she arrived at Pyrgo with her baby and pets Lord John was shocked to see how ill she looked.

"Good Madam, eat somewhat to comfort yourself," he entreated, but Lady Catherine's eyes filled with tears as she shook her head, saying, "Alas, Uncle, what a life is this to me, thus to live in the Queen's displeasure. But for my Lord and my children I would I were buried."[1]

Urged by her uncle, Lady Catherine made an effort to soften the Queen in a letter beseeching forgiveness, "for my disobedience and rash mating of myself without your highness' consent." Unfortunately at this juncture a pamphlet appeared setting forth the legality of Lady Catherine's marriage, and her right to the throne after Elizabeth's death. Into custody went Lord John Grey; back to prison the Earl of Hertford, and Lady Catherine to the charge of Sir William Petre at Ingatestone.

[1] Ellis's *Original Letters*, 2nd series, Vol. II.

CHAPTER IV

AFTER sending Lady Catherine to the Tower, Elizabeth continued her progress, returning to London on the 22nd of September. The citizens, for joy at their young Queen's return, rang the church bells, and went out to Islington to meet her in such vast numbers that the road became blocked, and "the hedges and ditches were cut down to make the next way for her."

The Court had scarcely time to settle at St. James's Palace and get unpacked before there came a report that the King of Sweden[1], reputed the handsomest man in Europe, intended to come in person to woo the Queen. As earnest of his intention, he sent on ahead "eighteen great horses, all of them pyed-coloured," and two ship-loads of treasure. Elizabeth though pleased with the piebald horses, and by no means averse to treasure, did not at all wish to have the King of Sweden for a husband.

The populace, however, decided that these preliminaries foreboded matrimony, one enterprising soul even going so far as to issue a picture wherein England's Virgin Queen and the King of Sweden were represented cheek by jowl after the approved manner of betrothed couples. Elizabeth promptly suppressed this artistic effort, and sent off in all haste to dissuade the royal suitor from his intended visit.

The general opinion was that nothing would stop him.

[1] Eric, King of Sweden, 1533–77. He married Karin Mansdatter, d. of a private soldier. He became insane and was deposed by his brother John and died in prison 24th Feb., 1577.

He started once, but was "blown homeward" by bad weather. "They say he is so ernest that he will come by land," wrote Sir William to the Earl of Sussex,[1] Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in a letter to which, at the Queen's express command, he added a personal request:

"The Queene's Majesty willeth me to signify to your lordship her contentation to have my lady, your sister, in her Court, as one of her Maydens of honor, if your Lordship will give order therein."[2]

Eric, King of Sweden, in the end came not, but Lady Frances Radcliffe arrived in due course to join the other ladies in the privy chamber. She was destined to play an important, though probably innocent part in connection with Shan O'Neil, the turbulent Irish chieftain who caused her brother, the Earl of Sussex, so much trouble.

Shan O'Neil, 2nd Earl of Tyrone, "had depoiled his father of all rule, who dyed soon after for griefe, and by a barbarous kind of election throwing up his shoo over his head, had upon him the Title of O'Neil."[3]

Not content with supplanting his father and brother, "he dyd cruelly, wylfully and trayterously, murther his brother, the Baron of Dungannon." Also he harried his neighbours when and how he could, entirely defying the

[1] Thomas, 3rd Earl of Sussex; m., 1st, Lady Elizabeth Wriothesley, d. of Thomas, Earl of Southampton; 2ndly, Frances, d. of Sir William Sidney, who became the foundress of Sidney-Sussex College, Cambridge. Sussex died in 1583. Lady Frances Radcliffe was his half-sister.

[2] *Queen Elizabeth and her Times*, T. Wright.

[3] Camden's *Annales*.

authority of the English Crown. Elizabeth, who had at first recognized him as Earl of Tyrone, revoked her consent and ordered the Earl of Sussex to subdue the rebel chief. In such a wild country this was easier said than done, but eventually through the influence of the Earl of Kildare[1] Shan agreed to go to England to sue for pardon for his manifold offences.

The appearance of the half savage chieftain, with his guard of gallowglasses, caused a sensation at Court. They all carried sharpened battle-axes, were "bare headed, with curled haire hanging downe, yellow surplices dyed with saffron, long sleeves, short coates, and hairy mantles."[2] O'Neil, who could speak no English, strode up the room till he reached the Queen, when, prostrating himself before her, he "confessed his crime and rebellion with howling."

After this show of submission Shan carried himself more arrogantly than ever, so that the courtiers called him mockingly, "O'Neil the great cousin to St. Patrick, friend to the Queen of England, enemy to all the world besides."

The Maids of Honour fully endorsed this description, but what amused them most of all was the fact that the Irish chief had lost his heart to one of their number. O'Neil admired all the English ladies, but in his eyes Lady Frances Radcliffe seemed by far the loveliest of them all. He therefore approached the Queen with a request that "she would give him a gentlewoman for a wife, such as he and she might agree upon."[3]

[1] Gerald Fitzgerald, 11th Earl of Kildare.
[2] Camden. [3] Irish MSS.

As O'Neil's matrimonial relations in Ireland were more complex than orthodox, Elizabeth put the matter aside, as she likewise did his requests for permission to return home. She had given him a safe conduct, it is true, but, once having secured him, she was very loath to let such a disturbing element return to Ireland. Shan, however, began to get into mischief—that is, he took to visiting the Spanish embassy, and Elizabeth in fright sent him back to Ireland.

Once among his own people, O'Neil stirred up trouble as fast as he could, to the very great annoyance of the Earl of Sussex, who was expecting his sister on a visit. When Shan O'Neil heard that Lady Frances had actually arrived in Dublin, he sent a deputation to the Lord Lieutenant, suggesting that as a brother-in-law he would prove less trouble to his lordship than as an openly professed enemy.

The Earl of Sussex never for a moment contemplated sacrificing Lady Frances, but he did most earnestly desire to get hold of Shan O'Neil. Therefore he sent back a reply that he "could not promise to give her against her will," but if Shan would visit him at Dublin, they should speak together and "if he liked her and she him they should both have his good will."[1]

Shan O'Neil seriously thought of accepting the invitation till he received a warning that the lady was brought over on purpose to entrap him, and if he went to Dublin he would never return.

On the strength of this communication Shan remained at home, but he could not put Lady Frances out of his

[1] Irish MSS.

mind, and wrote to ask Sir William Cecil to use his influence in the matter. Cecil read the letter, but "did not venture to move the matter to the Queen fearing how she might take it."

The Radcliffe faction at Court were in constant friction with that of Lord Robert Dudley, so that when the Earl of Sussex returned from Ireland, "being together at Court, and both in high employments, they grew to direct forwardness, and were in continual opposition; the one setting the watch and the other the sentinel, each on the other's actions and motions."[1]

The Earl of Sussex had his cause backed by two relations in the privy chamber: his sister Lady Frances, and a young cousin, Mary Radcliffe.

Mary, who came to Court in rather an unusual manner, was the daughter of a romantic marriage, her father being a younger son of the 1st Earl of Sussex,[2] and her mother the daughter of a London merchant.

One day, during the reign of King Henry VIII, the Earl of Sussex with his son Humphrey and a party of friends rode out of London to take part in a tournament. As the gay cavalcade passed through the little village of Kensington, people hurried to the windows to catch a glimpse of the gorgeously caparisoned riders and horses. One girl, Isabella Harvey, who with her father happened to be visiting some friends, leaned out so far in her eagerness to see all there was to see that she dropped her glove

[1] *Fragmenta Regalia*, Sir Robert Naunton.

[2] Robert Radcliffe, 1st Earl of Sussex. Lord High Chamberlain in the reign of Henry VIII.

just as Sir Humphrey Radcliffe rode by. Gloves being costly luxuries, and chivalry the pursuit of every true knight, Sir Humphrey dipped his lance, impaled the glove, and returned it to its owner, who blushed as she thanked him for his courtesy.

The Earl and his companions rode on, but Isabella's beauty had cast such a spell upon Sir Humphrey that he contrived to leave his companions and returned in all haste to Kensington.

Edmund Harvey and his daughter were about to set off for London, and as the road thence bore an evil reputation for robbery, generally accompanied with violence, the merchant readily acquiesced in the knight's suggestion that he should bear them company.

Sir Humphrey represented himself as a squire in service with the Earl of Sussex, and so agreeable did he make himself that when they reached Edmund Harvey's house in Cheapside he received an invitation to come in to supper.

The friendship between Isabella and Sir Humphrey soon ripened into love, nor did her father raise any objection when asked to give his consent to their marriage. Isabella Harvey came to her husband a richly dowered bride, but they had been married some time before she learned the fact that her husband was the son, not the servant, of Robert, Earl of Sussex, Lord High Chamberlain of England.

They settled at Elstow in Bedfordshire, where Mary, their first child, was born. She grew up to be a beautiful accomplished girl, and on New Year's Day, 1561, Sir Humphrey brought her to be presented to the Queen.

New Year's Day was the most important day of the year at Court, for on it, according to established custom, the sovereign received gifts from the chief subjects of her realm. The presentations took place in the presence-chamber, where Elizabeth in regal finery took her seat on a velvet canopied, jewel-encrusted throne, whilst white-clad Maids of Honour grouped themselves to form an effective background.

Forward came the donors, gifts in hand: lords spiritual and temporal, ministers of state, ambassadors, courtiers, officers of the household, ladies of all ranks. Down on their knees before the Queen went they one by one; humbly they begged her acceptance of their gift: silken purses full of good red angels, magnificent carcanets of gold inset with precious stones, jewelled pendants, sparkling rings, chased bodkins for the hair, trinkets of all kinds to be given into the charge of Mrs. Blanche Parry.

Sir William Cecil presented:

"a standishe garnished with silver gilt and mother of pearle, with an inke-pott of like silver gilt, and a glass of chrystall in the cover, the base plated with like silver gilt; a pen-knife, thafte of silver gilt, and a seal of bone typped with silver guilt."

The Earl of Warwick[1] offered:

"a smocke wrought with black silk, a peire of sleeves and a partlett wrought with gold, silver, and black silk."

Sir Francis Knollys gave £10 in money, and his wife,

[1] Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick, elder brother of Lord Robert Dudley.

one of the Queen's ladies, "a faire carpet[1] of needlework," the ends fringed with gold and silver.

The Maids of Honour curtsied low as they in turn presented their mistress with gifts which their own skilful fingers had fashioned, Kate Carey receiving special commendation for a set of "six handkerchiefs edged with gold, silver, and silk."

Anon came the Court physicians with pots of preserved ginger and orange flowers. Then up stepped the master cook filled with conscious pride of his masterpiece, a triumph of sugary confectionery in the shape of a chess board with chessmen of delectable sweetmeats. The yeoman of the guard ran him close with "a very faire marchpane made like a tower, with men and sundry artillery in it."[2] Following close on his heels came a servant of the pastry with a lordly quince pie.

Mrs. Montagu, the Queen's silk-woman, occasioned prodigious excitement among the Maids of Honour, for the present she proffered the Queen took the novel form of a pair of silk stockings. Such luxuries had never been seen in the privy chamber before, and the ladies listened eagerly when the Queen questioned Mrs. Montagu respecting them. Mrs. Montagu replied that she had had them made on purpose for Her Majesty and would at once set some more in hand.

"Do so," quoth the Queen, "for indeed I like silk stockings so well, because they are pleasant, fine, and delicate, that henceforth I will weare no more cloth stockings."[3]

[1] Carpets were used to cover tables and chairs, the floors being strewn with rushes.

[2] Lists in Nichols' *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth.*

[3] Stowe's *Chronicle.*

When the excitement over the silk stockings had subsided, Sir Humphrey Radcliffe brought forward his daughter Mary and laughingly presented her as a New Year's gift.

Elizabeth, being in high good humour, replied graciously that she would take Mary to be one of her Maids of Honour, for by the death of Lady Jane Seymour, the imprisonment of Lady Catherine Grey and the marriage of Lettice Knollys,[1] there were several vacancies in the privy chamber.

Mary soon became a great favourite with her royal mistress, the more so because it really seemed as if at last she had found a Maid of Honour of like thinking with herself on the subject of matrimony. From the first Mary refused to take the courtiers at their own valuation, making shrewd estimation of the facile flatterers, who in the Queen's presence professed to be dazzled by her beauty, but directly her back was turned made ardent protestations of love to the Maids of Honour.

> "With 'lovely lady,' 'mistress of my heart,'
> 'Pardon your servant,' and the rhymer play,
> Railing on Cupid and his tyrant's dart."[2]

Mary laughed at their flowery phrases, saying straightly to one whose attentions wearied her, "that his wit was like custard, nothing good in it but the sop, and when that was eaten you might throw away the rest."[3]

Many men wooed Mary Radcliffe, but after a tepid love

[1] Lettice Knollys m. Walter Devereux, 1st Earl of Essex.
[2] *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, by Thomas Dekker.
[3] Thoms's *Anecdotes and Traditions.*

affair with a gentleman of the temple she settled down to obdurate virginity, serving the Queen, "honourably, virtuously, and faithfully for forty years."

Mistress and maid alike took the cult of Cynthia seriously, undeterred by the bleak prospect supposedly allotted to old maids in a future life, where they performed the unattractive duty of leading apes through the fires of hell.[1]

Little Mistress Arundell, another new-comer to Court, held very different views from Mary Radcliffe. Being unused to the art of dissimulation, she confessed candidly, when questioned by the Queen, "that she had thought much about marriage, if her father would give his consent to the man she loved."

"You seem honeste, i' faith," said Elizabeth. "I will sue for you to your father."

Mistress Arundell expressed gratitude, whilst the other girls exchanged glances of surprise, not unmixed with apprehension, for they knew the Queen too well to be misled by her seeming compliance.

Shortly after Sir Robert Arundell came to Court, when the Queen taxed him with his young daughter's love affair. This being the first he had heard of it, he expressed considerable annoyance, and very reluctantly gave his consent when pressed to do by the Queen.

"Then I will do the rest," quoth she and sent a messenger for Mistress Arundell.

[1] " I must dance barefoot on her wedding-day,
And, for your love to her, lead apes in hell."
Taming of the Shrew, II, 1.

The girl came in shyly, fearing her father's displeasure, but her face brightened when Elizabeth announced that she had persuaded Sir Robert to leave the matter wholly in her hands.

"Then I shall be happy, an' please your Grace," said she, with shining eyes.

"So thou shalt, but not to be a fool and marry," quoth Elizabeth. "I have his consent given to me, and I vow thou shalt never get it into thy possession. I see thou art a bold one to own thy foolishness so readily."[1]

[1] Sir J. Harrington's *Nugæ Antiquæ*.

CHAPTER V

IN 1563 a serious outbreak of the plague alarmed the Queen, so that she left London in a hurry and took the Court down to Windsor. Stringent precautions were taken to prevent the infection spreading, all intercourse with the capital being expressly prohibited, "upon payne of hangynge withowt any judgement." To demonstrate that this was no idle threat, the authorities erected a new pair of gallows in Windsor market-place, "to hange up all suche as shuld come ther from London."

The old castle was cold and draughty, and by no means in good repair. Maids of Honour made plaint "to have their chamber ceiled, and the partition that is of boards there to be made higher, for that the servants look over"; whilst the squires of the body complained bitterly that their chamber required "to be ceiled overhead, and boarded under foot, for that it is so ruinous and cold."

Elizabeth, with customary energy, set to work to make the castle habitable, and when cart-loads of furniture arrived from the other palaces things began to look more home-like. Tapestry gave warmth to the large rooms, painted cloths took the chill from unused bed-chambers, silk hangings, together with fur-lined quilts of gold and silver, gave comfort to four-post bedsteads.

Out of doors Elizabeth planned the pleasant terrace, where she and her ladies could pace up and down for exercise, if disinclined for rougher walking in the park. Here on sultry summer days when the heat haze danced over the valley, Maids of Honour brought their cushions

and spent idly happy hours watching the younger courtiers practising at the Quintain in the fields below. They were proficient horsemen most of them, for "to ride cumlie, to run faire at a ring" were considered essential for every gentleman. The quintain required an accurate eye and steady hand, for, unless the competitor hit the mark accurately, the pivot swung round so that he had much ado to escape the bag of sand which hung on the other end.

At Windsor, with fewer diversions than at the palaces nearer London, Elizabeth and her ladies spent a good deal of time hunting and hawking in Windsor forest. Sometimes they hunted the hart at force, riding both hard and far; at others they stood in stands with their cross-bows to shoot at driven deer.

Falconry they all loved, and each girl had her own bird, which she carried hooded on her wrist, when the royal party rode forth to fly to wild-duck by the river,[1] or in pursuit of high mounting game. Ann Russell, keenest of falconers, shaded her eye as she watched her hawk pursue its quarry high up into the azure sky, till only a tiny dot betokened

"A falcon, towering in her pride of place."[2]

The Queen whilst at Windsor took the opportunity to rub up her Latin and Greek; also she started a course of theological reading in anticipation of a visit to the universities. News of this intended tour threw Cambridge into extreme disquiet. Not being used to entertaining

[1] For a description of "A Flight at Brook" see Michael Drayton's *Polyolbion*, Sonnet XX.

[2] *Macbeth*, II, 4.

ladies it feared the worst, in no wise reassured by Sir William Cecil's express desire "that two things may especially appeare in the University: order and learning."

Reverend doctors straightway set to work on learned perorations; poets with rumpled hair composed complimentary odes; college cooks created epics in sugary confectionery; erudite professors sought humbly for instruction in Court etiquette; the public orator wished his mother had not borne him.

King's College being appointed for the Queen's residence, the fellows thereof were bundled out, to mingle lamentations with their brethren of Caius, ejected to make room for the Maids of Honour.

Sir William Cecil, Chancellor of the University, though suffering from a bad attack of gout, politely referred to as an "unhappy grief" in his foot, managed to get down to Cambridge to see that all was in readiness for the Queen's reception.

The vice-Chancellor, supported by the proctors and heads of Colleges, waited on him with propitiating offerings in the shape of two pairs of gloves, a highly ornate marchpane and two sugar loves. These accepted, the anxious deputation, still feeling urgently in need of friends, hurried round to all the powerful nobles who had arrived in advance, to beg their acceptance of gloves and sugar loves.

August 5th found Cambridge bedecked and garnished; streets strewn with fresh rushes, and laudatory verses fixed in conspicuous places, so that, should the tongue of the public orator fail him, the Queen might at least read of the University's earnest desire to do her honour.

Scholars in caps and gowns lined the way, having received careful instruction to fall down on their knees at the Queen's approach and cry "Vivat Regina" with one voice. This done to the full capacity of their youthful lungs, they were to return to their rooms, "and in no wise to come to Court, to the Disputations, or to the plays." If upon some urgent occasion they entered the town, "they were to go two and two; upon a great pain."[1]

Elizabeth, wearing a slashed black velvet dress, and a gold spangled hat with " a bush of feathers," entered the city on horseback, followed by the ladies of the privy chamber in black velvet riding clothes.

Forward stepped the Public Orator; prefaced three deep curtsies, then down on his knees went he with a prayer in his soul and the words of a Latin oration on his lips. It proved an even more trying ordeal than he had anticipated, for in order to show her complete comprehension of Latin, Elizabeth constantly made interpolations in that tongue. Only when the orator made a happy shot by praising the merits of Virginity the Queen heartened him by exclaiming in English, "God's blessing on thine heart! There continue!"

Crowded days followed, thoroughly enjoyable to Elizabeth, who delighted to show off her learning, "and talked very much with divers scholars in Latin," but exceeding wearisome for the background of Maids of Honour.

Sightseeing began at six in the morning when the

[1] Contemporary account printed in Nichols' *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth.*

Queen rode the various Colleges, getting back so late that the ladies had hardly time to finish their dinner before it was time to go and to listen to the speeches in St. Mary's church. There they remained from three to seven, and might have been much longer had not "the night coming on clean took away the disputations of the lawyers." Even then the tired ladies did not get release, for Lord Robert Dudley, "humbly desired Her Majesty to speak something to the University in Latin."

Elizabeth, with a carefully prepared speech in readiness, feigned reluctance, declaring "that if she might speak her mind in English she would not stick at the matter." This, however, could not be, for "nothing might be said openly to the University in English."

Courtiers entreated; dons pleaded; Maids of Honour exchanged glances, till at length the Queen rose and made a speech in Latin so that her listeners "were marvelously astonied."

So pleased was Elizabeth at her reception that she said plainly that "if provision of beer and ale could have been made her Grace would have remained till Friday."

Soon after her return to Whitehall, Elizabeth made display of her less erudite talents for the benefit of Sir James Melville, who came to Court as envoy from Mary, Queen of Scots. Elizabeth firmly determined that he should not go back in ignorance of her beauty and talents, being not a little jealous of the flattering reports current concerning the Scotch Queen.

Day after day did Elizabeth, duly set off by a demure background of Maids of Honour, appear in the national

garb of one foreign country after another. Dressed as an Italian lady, with her red-gold locks hanging loose, she preened before Sir James, desiring to know "whether my Queen's hair or hers was best, and which of them two was fairest?"[1]

Sir James replied cautiously, "the fairness of them both was not their worst faults." Commanded to be more specific he gave opinion that Elizabeth was the fairest Queen in England, and Mary in Scotland. No amount of evasion could save him from definite comparison, and eventually he reluctantly admitted that possibly Elizabeth might be a shade the whiter of the two, but his Queen was very lovely.

Elizabeth next inquired as to their relative heights, when Sir James unhesitatingly gave the palm to Mary.

"Then she is too tall for a woman," quoth Elizabeth, displeased, "for I myself am neither too high nor too low."

Next day the envoy had opportunity to judge of his hostess's skill in music, Lord Hunsdon conducting him to a gallery, "where though he durst not avow it, I might hear the Queen play upon the virginals."

Sir James, perfectly aware that the performance had been arranged expressly for his benefit, entered the room from whence came sounds of music. Elizabeth, seated before an instrument of cedar wood ornamented with red, blue and gold, feigned ignorance of the intruder, as the silver and ivory keys jumped up and down beneath her nimble fingers. Presently with a start she turned towards Sir James, crying out on him for an eavesdropper,

[1] Sir James Melville's *Memoirs*.

declaring that she never played before men but only for her own pleasure.

Sir James made his peace by admitting that Elizabeth's musical ability somewhat exceeded Mary's, who, however, he claimed played reasonably well for a Queen. Two days later Elizabeth arranged a ball that he might see her dance and give his opinion, "whether she or my Queen danced best." To which Sir James replied with crafty ambiguity that Mary "danced not so high or disposedly as she did."

Vanity, always one of Elizabeth's foibles, gained increase from the excessive laudation amidst which she lived. Naturally given to introspection, intensely conscious of her beauty and cleverness, she saw herself the "miracle of the age," a savante, a wit; in all transcendent.

None contradicted this illusion save one brave prelate, who said boldly in the pulpit "that she who had been meek as a lamb, was become an untameable heifer." The immediate result of this outspoken criticism reacted on the preacher, he being arrested coming down from the pulpit, "as an over confident man that dishonoured his sovereign."

A rival Elizabeth would not brook; the mention of a successor caused her to say angrily that she could not endure to have her winding-sheet ever before her eyes, and that the English ran after the heir to the throne more than the reigning sovereign.

The Commons, however, brought up the subject with maddening pertinacity: an heir or a husband, that much they humbly asked of Her Majesty, and were soundly rated for their pains.

Elizabeth told them she was wedded to her country and people, whilst, for a memorial after death, she desired it should be engraved on her tombstone, "Here lieth Elizabeth, which reigned a Virgin, and died a Virgin."[1]

Apart from personal considerations, Elizabeth with clear foresight saw that to name as successor either Lady Catherine Grey, the hope of the Protestants, or Mary, Queen of Scots, the Catholic candidate, would be to divide the kingdom into two factions and provide a head for malcontents.

Matrimony, with consequent diminution of her power, she frankly disliked, apart from the dangers which must inevitably ensue from a foreign alliance. To wed a Spaniard would incur the enmity of France; to espouse a Frenchman invite the hostility of Spain; whilst a marriage with anyone else would give France and Spain common cause to unite together for the destruction of England.

Lord Robert Dudley hoped that after the death of his wife he would be raised to the proud position of Queen's consort, but time passed, tongues wagged, scandal accumulated, yet still he remained the Queen's favourite; just that, but nothing more.

One moment Elizabeth showed him exaggerated affection; the next trounced him soundly for presumption, exclaiming angrily, "s'death my Lord, I have wished you well; but my favour is not so locked up for you, that others shall not participate thereof, for I have many servants unto whom I have, and will, bequeath my

[1] Camden.

favour, and likewise resume the same; and if you think to rule here I will take a course to see you forth coming."[1]

Words of such import were sweet as music to the ears of the Earl of Sussex and other great lords who hated the favourite, so that they took heart of grace and sternly remonstrated with Lord Robert on his general conduct, especially for "kissing Her Majesty when he was not invited thereto."

Ladies of the privy chamber knew not what to think, and as usual in all Court quarrels took sides. Mary and Frances Radcliffe, belonging to the Sussex party, saw no good in Lord Robert; Blanche Parry and Mrs. Ashley openly championed him.

Mrs. Ashley, always privileged, asked her old pupil outright if she meant to marry Lord Robert.

"What!" cried Elizabeth scornfully. "Dost thou think me so unlike myself; and so forgetful of majesty, as to prefer my servant, whom I myself have advanced, before the greatest Princes of the Christian world."[2]

At this crisis Elizabeth threw both parties into equal perplexity by creating Lord Robert, Earl of Leicester (accompanying the honour with the gift of Kenilworth Castle), at the same time saying that as she esteemed him "as her brother and best friend" he would make a suitable husband for Mary, Queen of Scots.

No one knew what to think, least of all Leicester, who regarded the suggestion as the work of Sir William Cecil, and expressly designed for his undoing. In perplexity he consulted Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, who suggested that

[1] Sir R. Naunton's *Fragmenta Regalia.* [2] Camden.

he should test the Queen's affection for himself by flirting with one of her ladies.

Leicester, being at his wit's end, said he would, and fixed on Lettice Knollys, the beautiful young Countess of Essex, for the dangerous experiment.

Once begun, the flirtation proceeded apace, to the alarm of the ladies trembling at the thought of what would happen when the Queen became aware of it.

As Leicester avowedly designed to arouse Elizabeth's jealousy, he ostentatiously deserted her for the company of Lettice, who, pleased with a seeming conquest, did all she could to lure him on. The Queen drew her own conclusions and drew them strong, so that even Leicester was aghast at the storm he had raised. Lettice fell from her high place in Elizabeth's friendship for ever, whilst the Maids of Honour had a sorry time listening to the ravings of a jealous woman who heretofore had never dreamt of a rival.

The Earl of Sussex and Sir William Cecil found the Palace in such an uproar that, much as they disliked Leicester, they united in an endeavour to prevent the Queen making herself ridiculous. Through their mediation a meeting was arranged between the two aggrieved parties. Elizabeth wept, upbraiding the Earl for unfaithfulness, whilst he on bended knee begged forgiveness, promising never to offend in like manner again. On these terms he resumed his old footing, and things went on exactly as before.

CHAPTER VI

AMBROSE DUDLEY, Earl of Warwick,[1] made no attempt to emulate his brother in the precarious position of Queen's favourite. Elizabeth honoured him as a good man, and brave soldier, to whom she gave command of an expedition to Normandy in support of the Huguenots.

During the siege of Havre, Warwick received a wound in the leg which incapacitated him for further active service, and on his return to Court he looked round among the ladies for one who would make him a third wife. His choice fell on Ann Russell, one of the most popular of the Maids of Honour, and as she, the Queen, and her father were willing the betrothal took place at once. Pietro Bozzari, an Italian poet, waxed eloquent concerning the prospective bride.

"To the Lady Anne Russell

O to how blest a lot is he commended
  Who, winning thee, with virtue will embrace
A form like Helen's, by delight attended,
  And tender love, and every virgin grace—
Thee, o'er whose cheek ingenuous honour throws
    Her exquisitest rose!

Though thine be genius, thou dost deign to cherish
  Genius with care—with many-languaged powers
Reaping the spoils of deeds that ne'er shall perish,

[1] He married, 1st, Anne, d. of William W. Horwood; 2ndly, Elizabeth, d. of George, Lord Talboys; 3rdly, Ann Russell.

Speeding with lyre or lute th' enchanted hours,
Or broidering webs whose beauty well might dare
Arachne to despair.

Why should I say with what refined discreetness
Thy converse teems? Why speak thy charming voice?
Thy gaze—thy steps—thy smile so full of sweetness—
Or thrilling dance, if dancing be thy choice?
Why speak of aught, when all thou say'st and dost
Is beautiful and just."[1]

The wedding was fixed for the 11th of November, 1565, and the courtiers determined to make the day a memorable one, if they could obtain the Queen's permission for a grand tournament. Accordingly they waited on her at the Earl of Bedford's house at Ivy Bridge in the Strand, where she had gone to pay a visit to Cecilia, Margravine of Baden, sister of her former admirer Eric, King of Sweden. Four days after her arrival in England the Margravine gave birth to a son to whom Elizabeth stood godmother, naming the child Edward Fortunatus.

Elizabeth and her ladies were being entertained at a banquet in honour of the new baby, when a herald entered to say there was a messenger without who craved to speak with the Queen. Permission given, in came Edwards of the Chapel Royal, booted and spurred to represent a postboy. Kneeling down, he announced that four valiant knights, Henry Knowles, Christopher Hatton, Thomas Leighton and Robert Colsett, wished to "hold joust and barriers" at the marriage of the Earl of Warwick and the Lady Ann Russell.

The Queen gave her consent, whereupon up stepped

[1] *Memoirs of the House of Russell*, J. Wiffen.

the Earl of Leicester, Lord Herbert, Arthur, Lord Grey, and twenty other gentlemen to announce their acceptance of the challenge.

That all knights might have warning of the impending tournament a notice was affixed to the Court gate at Westminster:

"You that in warlike ways and dedes of arms delight,
You that for cuntryes cause or ells for ladyes love dare fyght
Know you foure knights ther be that come from foren land
Whos hawtye herts and corage great hath mov'd to take in hand,
With sword, with speare and shild, on fote, on horsebacke to,
To try what you by force of fyght, or otharwyse, can do
Prepare your selves therfore this challenge to defend,
That tromp of fame your prowes great abrod may sound and send.
And he that best can do, ye same shall have the prize.
Ye day, ye place, and forme and fyght, loo here before your eyes."[1]

Elizabeth, to do honour to Ann, one of her closest friends, arranged that the wedding should take place in the private chapel at Whitehall. The Maids of Honour who were to be bridesmaids held anxious consultation as to their dresses. Ann wished them all to be alike, and eventually they decided on green velvet and silver lace, over kirtles of yellow satin.

The bride's wedding dress was of cloth of silver shot with blue, and an over dress of purple velvet richly embroidered in silver. On her head she wore a dainty caul of fretted gold, and very charming indeed did she look, when the two young bachelors, the Earls of Rutland[2]

[1] Stowe's *Memoranda*.

[2] Edward, 3rd Earl of Rutland, suc. his father in 1563, when he became one of the Queen's Wards.

and Oxford,[1] came to lead her forth on the wedding morning.

The bridegroom wore a suit of gold and purple trimmed with sables, whilst his brother, the Earl of Leicester, in gold-embroidered purple satin, gave the bride away.

At the conclusion of the ceremony there was a grand banquet in the council chamber, "at a long board well set with lords and ladies." After the usual speeches and compliments, the ladies of the bridal party adjourned to the gallery overlooking the tilt yard, whilst the competitors hastened off to don their armour.

The tournament lasted for three days, the challengers making their head-quarters at the Queen's Mews, and the defendants with the Earl of Leicester at Durham House.

An unfortunate accident marred the conclusion of the wedding-day festivities, for in compliment to the Earl of Warwick, as Master of the Ordinance, Robert Thomas, "a valiant serviceable man," arranged a discharge of cannon "which terribly yielded forth the nature of their voice, to the great astonishment of diverse." By mischance, at the second firing the master gunner "was unhappily slaine by a piece of one of the chambers, to the great sorrow and lamentation of many."[2]

Ann Russell's was by no means the only wedding, for matrimony played havoc among the ladies of the privy chamber, who one by one forsook the cult of Cynthia in order to take unto themselves husbands. Philadelphia Carey married Thomas, Lord Scrope; her sister Kate,

[1] Edward Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, Crown Ward, also under Burleigh.

[2] Stowe's *Chronicle*.

Lord Charles Howard,[1] "a hearty gentleman, and cordial to his sovereign and of a most proper person."[2] Katherine Knevett left to become Lady Paget,[3] and Cecilia Knollys the bride of Sir Thomas Leighton, one of the challengers who had tilted so bravely at Ann Russell's wedding.

Frances Radcliffe, with never a thought of Shan O'Neil, engaged herself to Sir Thomas Mildmay, a son of Sir Walter Mildmay, Chancellor of the Exchequer. The wedding festivities were on a grand scale, the Queen and foreign Ambassadors being present. The latter were not entirely an unmixed blessing, for the rivalry between the representatives of France and Spain was so intense that in matters of precedence neither would give way to the other. The patriotic feelings of their respective suites likewise ran so high that an encounter between the two parties generally ended in bloodshed.

English courtiers held both nationalities in poor esteem, declaring that the only difference between them lay in the fact, that the Frenchmen were wiser than they looked, whereas the Spaniards seemed wiser than they were.

The Earl of Sussex and Sir Walter Mildmay waited on the Queen to know if, and how, they should invite the Ambassadors to Frances Radcliffe's wedding. In the end the French Ambassador came to the bridal dinner, and the Spanish Ambassador to supper, Elizabeth being present at

[1] Son of William, Lord Howard of Effingham, Lord High Admiral against the Armada. Created Earl of Nottingham 1597. Brother of Mary Howard.

[2] Fuller's *Worthies*.

[3] Henry, 2nd Lord Paget; she m., 2ndly, Sir Edward Carey, master of the jewel house.

both and dividing her favours with strict impartiality between the jealous representatives of her rival suitors.

Though the Queen's Maids of Honour were sadly depleted, she did not lose their services, for Lady Warwick, Lady Charles Howard, Lady Scrope, Lady Leighton and Lady Paget all returned to Court as ladies of the bedchamber.

The young matrons, in full consciousness of their dignity as married women, were by no means disposed to be relegated to the position of a background which they had unwillingly occupied as unmarried girls. Instead they showed every disposition to make themselves as prominent and attractive as they possibly could.

Elizabeth wished to emphasize the importance of royalty, by establishing a monopoly of everything likely to enhance a Queen. This, with so many ladies eager to emulate, if they could not rival their mistress, she found by no means easy. Did the Queen wear silk stockings, then no more cloth hose for the ladies of the privy chamber. With their ankles all alluringly outlined by silk stockings, they waited for Elizabeth to state a new fashion, which hotfoot they must have too. Lace ruffs, kept in place by wire "supportasses," were common neckwear at Court, but the year of Ann Russell's wedding saw the introduction of an innovation which revolutionized ruffs. Mistress Dinghen, a Dutch woman, came to England, and proceeded to demonstrate the uses of starch. Englishwomen, quickly appreciating the possibilities of this new method, flocked to Mistress Dinghen, eagerly proffering the £5 fee which she charged for initiating pupils into the mysteries

of starching, with an extra twenty shillings for instruction in making starch. Steel or silver poking sticks were next used in preference to the old-fashioned setting-sticks, and a new industry sprang into being.

Higgins, a tailor, established a great reputation for his ruffs or picardels, and his shop, in a road above Westminster called Piccadilly, held infinite variety of them, "either clogged with golde, silver, or silk lace of stately price, wrought all over with needle work, speckled and sparkled heer and there with the sonne, the moone, the starres, and many other antiquities strange to beholde. Some are wrought with open woorke down to the midst of the ruffe and further, some with purled lace so cloyd, and other gewgawes so pestered, as the ruffe is the least parte of itself."[1]

Higher and higher soared the Queen's ruffs; in stiffened emulation followed those of her ladies. The Puritans, who considered all vanity a sin, tried honestly, but quite unavailingly, to check the prevailing fashion. They might call starch the "devil's liquor," tell a harrowing story of a young Dutch lady, who when she couldn't get her ruff to set properly, said the devil might take her if she ever wore one again. The devil did take her; he appeared at once in the guise of an obliging gentleman, who offered to arrange the ruff, but instead twisted her neck. Her coffin, seeming strangely heavy, was opened, and found to contain a black cat and burnt ruffs. The ladies heard, not entirely disbelieving; but beyond a resolution not to let unknown gentlemen fasten their ruffs, they were no whit

[1] *The Anatomie of Abuses*, Philip Stubbes.

deterred from wearing them as fine, and as large as possible.

Another exponent in the art of starching was the wife of Boonen, the Queen's coachman, who himself introduced an even more astounding novelty in the use of coaches. Heretofore young and intrepid ladies rode on horseback; older or more timorous ones sat pillioned behind their husbands or menfolk, whilst the infirm were carried in horse litters.

The first coaches caused a sensation, being regarded as very strange "monsters," the sight of which "put both horse and man into amazement." Comfortable, certainly they were not, for, being devoid of springs, they jolted the occupants unmercifully as they rumbled over the cobbled streets.

Elizabeth, though she complained bitterly of stiffness as the result of a drive, considered that the prestige was worth it, and ordered several coaches to be built for her with all speed. One was to be lined with red leather, another upholstered in black velvet embossed with gold; all of them richly gilded, and adorned with waving ostrich plumes. The sight of these equipages roused the envy of all the ladies, though the Queen discountenanced the idea of coaches being used by anyone but royalty. In State processions she rode in one alone, the others following empty, the ladies of the privy chamber following on horseback as before.

Young married ladies, however, importunated their husbands that they, too, might have coaches. No more would they look favourably on rich saddles, litters or

pillions; coaches they wanted, and nothing else would satisfy them. Craftily they urged the convenience, and lessening of expense it would mean, for when a lady of quality rode abroad she must have:

"Six or eight servingmen to attende her, she must have one to carrie her cloake and Hood, least it raine, another her fanne, if she use it not herselfe, another her Boxe with Ruffes and other necessaries, another behinde whom her Mayde or Gentlewoman must ryde, and some must be loose to open gates, and supply other services that may be occasioned. Now to deminish and cut of this charge, as well of horse as men, *there is now a new invention*, and that is, she must have a coach, wherein she, with her Gentlewomen, Mayde, and Chyldren, and what necessaries as they or any of them are to use, may be caryed and conveyed with smaller charge, lesse cost, and more credite, as it is accompted."[1]

In the end the husbands capitulated: "and after a while divers great ladies, with as great jealousy of the Queen's displeasure made them coaches, and rid them up and downe the countries to the great admiration of all beholders."[2]

[1] *A Health to the Gentlemanly Profession of Servingmen*, by W.W. [2] Stowe's *Annales*.

CHAPTER VII

THE introduction of coaches did not diminish the importance of the Thames, which still remained the chief highway between London and Westminster. All the large houses along the Strand whose spacious gardens ran down to the river had, as a matter of course, their landing-stages and private barges, with a staff of watermen. Sergeant-porter Keyes, keeper of the Queen's watergate at Whitehall, was the biggest man employed about the Court, for he stood six feet six inches in his socks, and was of girth proportionate. The young Maids of Honour had a warm corner in their hearts for the jovial widower who claimed connection with the Knollys family, and used to give many parties in his room over the watergate, where would-be voyagers found shelter and hospitality when tide or weather proved contrary.

Lady Mary Grey came there in company with the other girls, and something in the forlorn little creature's appearance touched the heart of the gigantic sergeant-porter. Tragedy marked her as one apart from her companions who prattled lightly of love, in confident security that a prince charming would surely come for them; only for Lady Mary did there seem no hope of a husband. As a child of eight she had been betrothed to Arthur, Lord Grey de Wilton, but when tragedy overtook the Suffolk family, he, like Lord Herbert, repudiated his intended bride. No other suitor appeared for Lady Mary, who after her sister Catherine's disgrace remained on at Court lonely and forgotten. She had not grown much in her nineteen

years, being only four feet in height—"little, crooked back and very ugly," the Spanish Ambassador described her; yet withal of true Tudor blood and possibly future Queen of England.

Sharp-tongued, kindly-hearted Blanche Parry, who ruled the privy chamber with a rod of iron, befriended the little princess all she could, knowing full well what small chance she had of happiness, and the practical certainty that Elizabeth would never allow her to marry.

Love, however, which laughs alike at Queens and locksmiths, did eventually come to little Lady Mary in the very unexpected guise of Sergeant-porter Keyes. Closely she hugged her secret, looking forward eagerly to the river excursions, when coming or going, she might hope for a few words from the big man whose eyes said more than his lips found opportunity. Now and again he gave her presents: a little mother-of-pearl scent-bottle hanging on a gold chain, two tiny rings; gifts which Lady Mary stored in her trinket-box and gazed at when alone.

One day Sergeant Keyes told Lady Mary that he loved her, and she in happiness gave assent. Though both had witnessed the consequence of Lady Catherine Grey's secret marriage, they were not intimidated thereby, but resolved to risk all in a like hazard as soon as might be. The celebration of a Court wedding in August, 1565, at which the Queen would be present, seemed a fitting opportunity, and Sergeant Keyes arranged to give a party to the ladies, in order that Lady Mary's presence at the watergate might be accounted for.

After the other Maids of Honour had returned to the

Palace, a priest came up the stairs, and there in the room over the Thames he joined together in the bonds of holy matrimony, Sergeant-porter Keyes, widower, Keeper of the Queen's watergate, and Lady Mary Grey, spinster, heir to the throne of England.

Before the end of the service some one knocked at the locked door, and Mrs. Arundell inquired anxiously for the whereabouts of Lady Mary Grey, who could not be found at the Palace. To delay meant discovery, so the little bride put on her hood, and bidding her husband a demure good night hastened back with her friend.

Lady Mary's secret did not remain a secret for more than a week or two, when Queen and Ministers were alike thrown into consternation by the discovery of what had taken place. "Here is an unhappy chance and monstrous," wrote Sir William Cecil, "the Sergeant Porter, being the biggest gentleman in the Court, hath married secretly the Lady Mary Grey, the least of all the Court."[1] Courtiers regarded the affair as a huge joke, the disparity in birth and size of the newly-wed couple calling forth innumerable witticisms.

Elizabeth saw no humour in the situation whatever, being furious that another of the Grey girls should presume to flout her authority. She had been angry with Lady Catherine for making a suitable match, and now was equally incensed with Lady Mary for making an unsuitable one.

To the Fleet prison went Sergeant-porter Keyes, and into the strait keeping of the Mother of the Maids Lady

[1] *Queen Elizabeth and her Times*, Wright.

Mary, till Elizabeth could find some one to take charge of her. This unwelcome duty fell to the lot of Mr. William Hawtry, of Chequers,[1] in Buckinghamshire, who received command to come over to Windsor and take Lady Mary back home with him.

The beautiful house and grounds among the Chiltern Hills held no charm for Lady Mary, who sought solace in her books. These were mostly of a religious nature, and of a sufficiently depressing nature to satisfy the most exacting Puritan. Three editions of the Bible and a book of Common Prayer had Lady Mary; a French dictionary and an Italian Commentary, *Mr. Knox his Answer to the Adversary of God's Predestination Mr. Knewstubbe's Readings*, *The Ship of Assured Safety*, *Mr. Cartwright's First and Second Reply*, *The Hunter of the Romish Fox*, *Godly Mr. Whitgift's Answer*, *The Duty of Perseverance*, *The Edic of Pacification*, *Sermons of the Four Evangelists*, *The Book of Martyrs*, and others of a like nature.

Lady Mary wrote to Sir William Cecil, begging him to use his powerful influence with the Queen for her forgiveness "for my great and heinous crime."

Persistently did she entreat permission to plead her cause in person, assuring Sir William Cecil of her complete repentance.

"Good Master Secretary, I have received your message you sente me by Master Hawtry, wherein I do parceive you are in doubt whether I do contenew in my folly or no; which I assure you I do as much repent as ever dyd any, not only for that I have thereby geven occasyon

[1] Now the country residence of England's Prime Minister.

to my enymyes to rejoyes at my fond harte, but also for that I have thereby incurred the Queene's Majestes desplessur, which is the greatest greff to me; for that the princes favor is not so sonn gotten agayn, and I assure you to be without it is such a greff to any true subjectes harte, as no turment can be greatter, as I most wofull wrecke have to well tryd; desiringe rather deathe then to be any longer without so greatt a jewel, as her Majesties favor should be to me. Wherefor for God sake, as you have begun for to be a means to her Majeste in gettinge me this great and longe desired treasure, so continew untell you have made me so happy as to obtain it for me, and this I leve to trubell you any forther at this tyme, prayinge to God to send you prossperus suces.

From Chekers the vij daye of February 1566.

Yours to commande during my lyfe

Mary Grey."[1]

The little prisoner did not regain her freedom, but after a year at Chequers Mr. Hawtry was told to take his charge up to London and hand her over to her step-grandmother, the Duchess of Suffolk.[2]

Any possibility of that lady's refusal was negatived by the simple expedient of not consulting her at all in the matter. Therefore, when Mr. Hawtry, with Lady Mary on a pillion behind him, rode up to the house in the Minories where the duchess resided, the surprised lady gave them but a dour reception.

The duchess, in common with the rest of Lady Mary's

[1] Ellis's *Original Letters*, Vol. II.

[2] Baroness Willoughby de Eresby in her own right. She became the fourth wife of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. After his death she married Mr. Richard Bertie.

relations, considered that she had made herself ridiculous by her unequal marriage, the odium of which reflected to a certain extent on them. She was therefore by no means pleased to have the young lady thrust upon her without so much as a moment's warning. Mr. Hawtry cut short the Duchess of Suffolk's tirade at the injustice of such an imposition, by producing the Queen's warrant, on the strength of which incontestable argument he washed his hands of all further responsibility and departed.

The irate duchess, though generally kind to the Grey girls, especially Lady Mary, who had frequently stayed with her on happier occasions, was too incensed to keep control of either her tongue or temper. Angrily she turned on the weeping visitor, demanding where her "stuff" was? Guests usually brought their own furniture to fill the empty chambers, but no pack mules stood about the Minories laden with Lady Mary's goods and chattels. As a matter of fact, these were still at Court, from whence they could not be removed without a royal warrant.

Bitterly the duchess grumbled, but even she dared do no more, and despatched messengers round to friends in the Minories, narrating the calamity which had befallen her, and requesting the loan of any spare pieces of furniture they happened to have by them.

When at length Lady Mary's "stuff" arrived it did not find favour in her grandmother's critical eyes, who wrote scathingly to Sir William Cecil on the subject of its deficiency:

"She hath nothing but an old livery feather bed, all to torn and full of patches, without either bolster or counter-

pane, with two old pillows, one longer than the other, an old quilt of silk, so tattered that the cotton comes out."

The duchess went on to request that Lady Mary might be provided with some furniture for her room:

"Also I would if I durst, beg further some old silver pots to fetch her drink in, and two little silver cups for her to drink out of, one for her beer, the other for her wine. A silver basin and ewer, I fear, were too much; but all these things she lacks, and it were meet she hath, but she hath nothing in the world."[1]

Lady Mary began by crying herself ill; the excitement of her marriage, followed by the shock of its discovery, anxiety about her imprisoned husband, combined with her own utter loneliness, had reduced the girl to a pitiable state. "I trust she will do well hereafter," wrote the duchess, "for not with standing that I am sure she is very glad to be with me, yet, I assure you, she is otherwise, not only in countenance, but in very deed, so sad and so ashamed of her fault—I think it is because she has never seen me since before—so that I cannot yet, since she came, get her to eat. All she hath eaten now these two days is not so much as a chicken's leg."

After the first strangeness had worn off, Lady Mary settled down happily at the Minories, striking up a great friendship with her two young relatives, Peregrine and Susan Bertie.

The death of Lady Catherine Grey[2] on January 27th,

[1] *Calendar of Domestic State Papers.*

[2] Lady Catherine died of decline whilst in the custody of Sir Owen Hopton at Yoxfold in Suffolk. She and her husband never met again after they parted in the Tower.

1568, brought this peaceful existence to an end, for as the Earl of Hertford's children were declared illegitimate, Lady Mary Grey became heiress presumptive to the English throne.

As the Duchess of Suffolk, who had been exiled for her faith under Queen Mary, had great influence with the Protestant party, who staunchly upheld the claims of the Suffolk line in opposition to Mary, Queen of Scots, Elizabeth did not choose that the now important wife of Sergeant Keyes should remain longer in her charge. She therefore caused Lady Mary to be removed to the custody of Sir Thomas Gresham, the great London merchant.

The new arrangement did not prove a success. Lady Mary was miserable, and detested Sir Thomas, who did not want to be bothered with her. Over and over again he wrote to Sir William for "the removing of my Lady Mary Grey," his wife's "bondaige and harte sorrowe."

These requests were ignored till the autumn of 1571, when Sir Thomas Gresham received word that Sergeant Keyes had died at Lewisham, just after his release from the Fleet prison.

Sir Thomas at once wrote to Sir William Cecil for instructions, informing him of the effect the news had had on Lady Mary:

"His death she very grievously taketh: She hath requested me to write to you to be a means to the Queen's majesty to be good to her and that she may have her Majesty's leave to keep and bring up his children. As I likewise desire to know her Majesty's pleasure, whether I shall suffer her to wear any black mourning apparel or not.

Trusting that now I shall presently be despatched of her by your good means."[1]

Lady Mary also besought, that "as God had taken away the cause of Her Majesty's displeasure," she might be allowed to go and live with her stepfather, Mr. Adrian Stokes, and his second wife, the widow of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton. Eventually this came to pass, and in time Lady Mary became her own mistress, and owner of a house in Aldersgate. Occasionally she visited Court, where Blanche Parry never failed to give her kindly welcome. She attended the Christmas festivities held at Hampton Court in 1576, when she presented Elizabeth with a New Year's gift of "four dozen buttons of gold, in each of them a seed pearl, and two pairs of sweet gloves." In return the Queen gave Lady Mary a silver cup and cover.

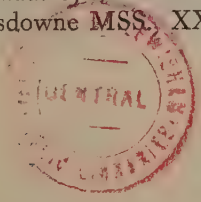
There were not many more opportunities of reconciliation, sincere or hollow, between the Queen and heiress presumptive, for on April 20th, 1578, little Mary Grey ended her life at the age of thirty-four.

In her will she remembered the friends who had been kind to her, and left tokens to those she loved.

"To the duchess of Suffolk one paire of hand Braceletts of gould with a jacinte stonne in each Bracelette which bracelettes were my late Mother's, or els my juell of unicornes horne."[2]

To Lady Throckmorton a "bowlle of silver with a cover," and to her very good friend Mrs. Blanche Parry "a little gilt bowlle with a cover to it."

[1] *Calendar of Domestic State Papers*, 1571.
[2] Lansdowne MSS., XXVII, 31.



CHAPTER VIII

SIR THOMAS GRESHAM, who had so reluctantly acted as custodian to Lady Mary Grey, earned deep gratitude from all the Maids of Honour by providing the most wonderful shopping centre in London. He did not do so out of compliment to the Queen's ladies, but rather to establish the worth of British merchants. Travelling much on the Continent, Sir Thomas contrasted the halls of the Hans towns with the inadequate accommodation provided for business men in his own country. Many of them arranged contracts in Lombard Street, "but their meetings were unpleasant and troublesome, by reason of walking and talking in an open street."[1]

Anything in the nature of a hall they had not, and, for want of some such place, St. Paul's Cathedral had become the general place of assemblage. There in the middle aisle, known as "Mediterranean,"[2] merchants discussed deals, lawyers met their clients, gallants their friends, masters engaged servants,[3] thieves picked pockets. Some made their reputations there, far more lost them.

James Pilkington, Bishop of Durham, preaching at St. Paul's Cross after the Cathedral had been struck by lightning in 1561, said plainly that it was a judgment for its secular abuses:

[1] Stowe's *Chronicle*.

[2] Here Ben Jonson lays the opening scene of the third act of *Every Man out of his Humour*.

[3] Falstaff, disparagingly of Bardolph, says, "I bought him in Pauls," 2nd *King Henry IV*, III, 2.

"The south alley for Popery and usury, the north for simony, and the horse fair in the midst for all kinds of bargains, meetings, brawlings, murders, conspiracies, and the font for ordinary payment of money, as well known as the beggar knows his bush."

Sir Thomas Gresham, on the death of his only son, determined to use his great wealth for the benefit of the city, and to erect a Bourse on Cornhill for the use of London merchants. The Queen, consulted in the matter, gave her unqualified approval, coupled with a promise that on its completion she would pay it a visit.

This took place on the 23rd January, 1571, to the joy of the Maids of Honour, for, owing to the plague, Elizabeth had not visited the city for two years. The village of Westminster might be both healthy and fashionable, but the Court ladies pined for a sight of the mercers' shops again.

London citizens, betwixt love of their Queen and pride in the fine new building surmounted by the grasshopper[1] crest of the Greshams, made the day a memorable one. Church bells rang, houses were decorated, streets fresh gravelled, whilst members of the city companies in new liveries lined the way. Women and children hung far out of the gabled houses waving their handkerchiefs in welcome; irresponsible blue-gowned apprentices threw up their caps, and shouted themselves hoarse as the Queen entered the city at Temple Bar, passing along Fleet Street,

[1] "And now he plies the news-full grasshopper
Of voyages and ventures to inquire."
Hall's *Satires*.

Cheapside, and Cornhill, to Sir Thomas Gresham's house in Bishopsgate.

The banquet provided proved worthy of the wealthy host's reputation, consisting as it did of every possible variety of rare and costly food served up on massive plate. Feasting and dancing lasted all the afternoon, to the impatience of the Maids of Honour who were afire to see the wonders of the Bourse.

Sir Thomas, in order to make a great show on the occasion of the Queen's visit, had offered the shops in the Paune[1] rent free for a year to those who would stock and furnish them with wax-lights on that day. Tradesmen eagerly availed themselves of the offer, so that the stalls "were plenteously stored with all kinds of rich wares and fine commodities."[2]

The Paune scintillated with myriads of candles, when Elizabeth after viewing the spacious halls below came upstairs to see the shops. In great good humour she expressed admiration of all she saw and, calling for a trumpeter, bade him loud-voiced proclaim her pleasure that the building should be called the "Royal Exchange, and so to be called from thence, and not otherwise."

Maids of Honour, fingering the ryalls[3] and angels in their silk purses, lingered round the stalls where nimble-tongued apprentices cried their goods with, "What lack

[1] Paune derived from Dutch *pandt*. Originally meaning a covered cloister, it came to be used for shops.

"One of them gave me this same ruffe of Laune
It lost one three pound, but last week in the Paune."
A Crew of Kind Gossips. S. Rowlandson.

[2] Stowe's *Chronicle*.

[3] A ryall=15s. An angel=10s.

ye, gentlewomen, what lack ye?" The girls felt they lacked many things with the wealth of the Paune displayed before their eager eyes. Mercer's rolls of thick pile velvet and shimmering silks, in all the most fashionable shades of Pease Porridge tawny, dead Spaniard, Goose-turd green, Popingay blue, Lady's blush, lusty gallant, Devil in the Hedge, Drakes colour, and Marigold. Ruffs of filmy lace, gossamer scarves, embroidered gloves, and coloured silk stockings, were beyond the powers of any Maid of Honour to resist.

At the shoe stalls were velvet slippers to match the mercer's stockings, together with stouter shoes of Spanish leather, embroidered in gold and silver, being rendered more completely seductive by sparkling buckles.

Silversmiths offered glittering necklaces, rings, pendants, jewelled hair-pins, and chased pomanders.[1] Apothecaries lured all the descendants of Eve with jars of sweet-smelling unguents, washes and wherewith cunning devices. Studious girls lingered at the booksellers, whilst prospective brides inspected household linen. All of them yearned to try on the hats at the milliners, who mixed these wares with "mouse-trappes, bird-cages, shooing-horns, lanthorns and Jewes trumpets," on which the Maids of Honour gazed without enthusiasm.

Very loath were they to leave such manifold attractions when at length the Queen called them to attend her downstairs. In contrast to the brilliance within the Royal

[1] Pomanders were either hollow to contain a ball of scent or fashioned like an orange, the quarters being filled with sweet-smelling essences. Ladies wore them at the end of their girdles.

Exchange, the night seemed dark and cheerless, as the girls waited whilst link boys sought for their horses fidgeting fretfully in the frosty air.

Homeward they rode between lines of torch-bearers, the flickering flames casting weird shadows on the cavalcade as it passed along the narrow, crowded streets. Rushlights twinkled in the lattice windows of the overhanging houses, and mothers lifted little children from their beds that they might see "Good Queen Bess" pass by.

Soon after visiting the Royal Exchange Elizabeth moved to Hampton Court, when a spell of bad weather kept the household within doors. The Maids of Honour piled on the logs in their sitting-room, extending numb fingers over the flames which seemed to catch reflection from the gilt ceiling above, and the bright gold threads of the arras on the walls. Outside snow and sleet billowed over the park, lashing the usually placid Thames into angry waves, and hurtled against the window-panes as if to contrast the comfort within to the discomforts of the open.

The little group of girls sitting on cushions round the fire, working or reading, comprised many new arrivals who had come to fill the places vacated by marriage. Mary Howard's two younger sisters Frances and Katherine joined her in the privy chamber, among their companions being Lady Elizabeth Hastings,[1] Mary Shelton,[2] Elizabeth Stafford,[3] Catherine and Eleanor Bridges,[4] Isabel

[1] d. of Francis, 2nd Earl of Huntingdon.

[2] d. of Sir John Shelton, of Shelton, Norfolk.

[3] d. of Sir W. Stafford, of Grafton. Her mother, Lady Stafford, was one of the ladies of the bedchamber, and served the Queen for forty years.

[4] d.'s of Edmund Lord Chandos.

Holcroft[1] and Ann Cecil,[2] "a very accomplished and learned lady."

Ann possessed domestic talents as well, and whilst her friends bent over their embroidery frames, she plied the spinning wheel her father had given to her for a New Year's present accompanied by some verses of his own composing:

"TO MISTRIS ANNE CECILL.

As yeres do growe, so cares increase,
And tyme will move to looke to thrifte
Though yeres in me work nothing lesse,
Yet for your yeres, a new-yeres gifte
This huswife's toy is now my shifte;
To set you on worke some thrifte to feele,
I send you now a spynning wheele.

But one thing first I wishe and pray,
Lest thirste for thryfte might soone you tire
Only to spynne one pound a daye,
And play the rest as tyme require.
Sweate not (oh fy!) fling rock in fyre
God sende, who sendeth all thrifte and welth,
You long yeres and your father helth!"[3]

Ann Cecil might be the cleverest of the girls, but Catherine Bridges carried off the palm as Court beauty. When she cut her forehead, George Gascoigne,[4] the poet, declared that envious Cupid "gan rap her on her pate,"

[1] d. of Sir Thomas Holcroft, of Vale-Royal, Cheshire.

[2] d. of Sir William Cecil by his second wife Mildred, one of the learned daughters of Sir Anthony Coke.

[3] MS. Lansdowne, 104, 76.

[4] George Gascoigne, poet, wrote *Posies of George Gascoigne*, *The Glasse of Government*, *The Princely Pleasures of Kenilworth*, *The Steele Glas*, etc. He died 1577.

because he feared her beauty would "break him of his rest." No scar, however, could eclipse "so bright a sonne as she."

"IN PRAYSE OF BRIDGES.

In Court who so demaundes
what dame doth most excell,
For my conceit I must needes say,
Faire Bridges beares ye bell.

Upon whose lively cheek, to prove
my judgement true,
The rose and lillie seem to strive for
equall change of hewe.

And there withall so well her
Graces all agree
No frowning cheere dare once
Presume in her sweet face to bee.

Although some lavishe lippes
Which like some other best
Will saye the blemishe on her brow
Disgraceth all the rest."

As usual in all great houses, the long gallery at Hampton Court contained the most valuable furniture and treasures. Between the high windows stood handsome Court cupboards filled with shining plate; cabinets of ebony and tortoise-shell dazzling the eye by their treasures of gold, silver and precious stones; a long table with Bible stories carved in mother-of-pearl; virginals made of polished wood inlaid with precious stones. Pictures and tapestry hung on the walls; one or two chairs of State were placed for the Queen and distinguished visitors, with piles of gaily hued cushions for those of lesser rank. Here on winter evenings, when thick velvet curtains shut out

the chill night, the Court musicians brought their instruments, that the ladies might restore their circulations by dancing. The Queen and her friends of high rank danced first, but as soon as they had finished the young folk took the floor. Courtiers disencumbered themselves of cloaks and swords, took up their hats (which except for dancing might not be worn in the Queen's presence), and besought the Maids of Honour to be their partners for the galliard.

Whilst her ladies danced the Queen looked on, calling first one, then another, of the company to converse with her. This they did kneeling before her chair, whilst down the gallery young men with plumed hats held over their hearts bowed to lithesome ladies who curtsied to the ground.

After dancing came games: chess, draughts, tables,[1] or the favourite card game of primero. The stakes at primero were high, and Elizabeth, when she took a hand, was very keen after her winnings. Lord North,[2] often one of the players at the Queen's table, made frequent entry in his household accounts of such items as:

"Lost at play with the Queen £28."

"Lost at play with the Queen £32."

"Lost at play with the Queen £70."[3]

Wherever Elizabeth was she had to be amused, and being a lady of more than average intelligence, neither the antics of Robert Greene, the Court fool, nor the sallies of

[1] Backgammon.

[2] Roger, 2nd Baron North, 1530–1600; Treasurer of Queen's household and Privy Councillor.

[3] Extracts from Lord North's household books. Nicols' *Progresses*.

little Mrs. Thompson, her female dwarf, sufficed for entertainment. Far more to the Queen's taste were the performances of Dick Tarleton, a famous comedian who

> "when his head was only seene,
> The Tire-house doore and Tapistrie betweene,
> Set all the multitude in such a laughter,
> They could not hold for scarse an hour after."[1]

Ladies and courtiers alike rejoiced to hear of Tarleton's arrival, for, apart from the amusement they anticipated for themselves, he did not fear Elizabeth in her worst tempers, and could "un-dumpish her at his pleasure."

Performances took place in the great hall, hung with tapestry representing negroes riding on elephants. The Queen on her chair of state, ladies and courtiers on cushions and joint-stools, formed the audience, who "began exceedingly to laugh when Tarleton first peept out his head."[2]

The clown, flat-nose, squint-eyed, roughish faced, came on to the stage beating a little drum,[3] as preliminary to one of his famous jigs, which he danced, sung and acted. Often by special request he would give "Tarleton's jigge of a horse loade of Fools," beginning:

> "What do you lacke? What do ye lacke?
> I've a horse loade of fooles,
> Squeaking, gibbering of everie degree;
> Ime an excellent workeman,
> And these are my tooles:
> Is not this a fine merie familie?"

[1] Thalia's *Banquet*, Epigram 94. Peacham.

[2] Nash's *Pierce Penilesse*.

[3] In 1602 a famous game cock at Norwich was called Tarleton because it always drummed with its wings before fighting.

One night Tarleton convulsed the Court by appearing with a long staff in his hand, and a flitch of bacon strapped on his back. Either his appearance or the noise of clapping annoyed the Queen's little dog "Perrico de Faldas," for he suddenly left the shelter of his mistress's farthingale, and leapt upon the stage. "Bow, wow, wow," barked Perrico de Faldas. "Wow, wow, wow," jeered Tarleton. The little dog ran at the clown; the clown ran at the little dog with his long staff. Up and down the stage they went whilst the audience rocked with merriment, till the Queen bade them take away the knave for making her laugh so excessively.

CHAPTER IX

THE social life of the kingdom rallied round the Queen, to whose Court flocked all the chief men of the time, the nobility, rich commoners and aspiring courtiers. Her own especial guard of honour, the gentlemen pensioners, were personable young men of good family and well-lined pockets, who, clad in black cloaks and carrying gilt battle-axes, played an important part in all Court ceremonies. Also there were the esquires of the body, gentlemen ushers, gentlemen of the privy chambers, and others holding various Court appointments.

All these professed extravagant devotion to the Queen, but at the same time they were by no means blind to the charms of her Maids of Honour. Each lady had her avowed "servant," who extolled his mistress's beauty, both in prose and verse. In her name and honour he tilted at the tournaments, earnestly begging a "favour," by which he might signify her acceptance of his homage.

These favours took various forms: a bracelet made of the adored one's hair, her glove which the gentleman stuck in his hat, her garter to be worn round his sleeve; her ribbon which, if he was one who wore long hair, he tied in his locks.[1] Sometimes the girls worked "little handkerchiefs of above three or four inches square, wrought round about; with a button or a tassel at each corner;

[1] *Fast:* Faith, here be some slight favours of hers, sir, that do speak it she is; as this scarf, sir, or this riband in my ear, or so; this feather grew in her sweet fan sometimes. *Every Man out of his Humour*, II, 1.

these edged with gold lace were placed in the gentlemen's hats, as favours of their Loves and mistrisses."[1]

Among the ladies' special friends were Mr. Thomas Coningsby,[2] known to be "very far in love" with Frances Howard; Mr. James Scudamore, who nourished a secret flame for Mary Shelton;[3] Lord Herbert, "the best horseman and tilter of his time," an admirer of Lady Elizabeth Hastings; and the studious Earl of Rutland, who had begun to pay very special attention to Isabel Holcroft.

Edward Vere, the erratic young Earl of Oxford, professed no particular regard for any of the ladies, nearly all of whom were wildly in love with him. Being one of the Queen's wards he had been brought up at Court, where he early distinguished himself in shooting, dancing, riding and many other accomplishments, whilst he had a way with the ladies that seemingly none of them could resist.

To male eyes he appeared less attractive, and Gabriel Harvey described him unflatteringly in a rattling bundle of hexameters:

"Strait to the back, like a shirt, and close to the breech like a diveling;
A little apish hat, couched fast to the pate, like an oyster;
French cambric ruffs, deep with a witness, starched to the purpose;
Delicate in speech; quaint in array; conceited in all points;
In courtly guiles, a passing singular odd man."

[1] Harrison's *Description of England*.

[2] Son of Humphrey Coningsby of Hampton Court, Herefordshire.

[3] Edward Somerset, suc. his father as 4th Earl of Worcester, 1588.

The ladies, however, saw no flaws in their idol, and continued to lay their hearts at his feet. Finding conquest so easy, the Earl of Oxford affected to doubt the constancy of womenfolk, and, sonnets being all the rage, he composed one likening the ladies to hawks used in falconry.

"IF WOMEN COULD BE FAIR[1]

If women could be fair, and yet not fond
Or that their love were firm, not fickle, still,
I would not marvel that they make men bound.
By service long to purchase their good will;
But when I see how frail those creatures are,
I muse that men forget themselves so far.

To make the choice they make, and how they change
How oft from Phoebus they do flee to Pan,
Unsettled still, like haggards[2] wild, they range—
Those gentle birds that fly from man to man;
Who would not scorn to shake them from the fist
And let them fly, fair fools, which way they list.

Yet for disport, we fawn and flatter both,
To pass the time when nothing else can please;

[1] Hannah's *Courtly Poets.*

[2] A falcon captured when full grown. These took longer to train, but were highly esteemed for their prowess.

"Another way I have to man my haggard,
To make her come and know her keeper's call;
That is, to watch her, as we watch these kites
That bate and beat and will not be obedient.
She eat no meat to-day, nor none shall eat;
Last night she slept not, to-night she shall not."

Taming of the Shrew, IV, 1.

And train them to our lure[1] with subtle oath,
Till weary of their wiles, themselves we ease:
And then we say, when we their fancy try,
To play with fools, oh, what a fool was I!"

Soon after his coming of age the Earl of Oxford took part in a grand tournament held at Whitehall. Dressed all in "crimson velvet, very costly," the Earl called himself the Red Knight, the three other challengers being Lord Charles Howard, the White Knight; Sir Henry Lee, the Green Knight; and Christopher Hatton, the Black Knight.

Very gay looked the decorated tilt yard that bright May morning, when the Queen and her ladies took their seats in the long gallery, from whence a broad flight of steps ran down to the ground. Being a gala day, the benches round the course were filled with spectators who had come from London in order to see the sport. Those who could afford it paid twelvepence for a seat; those who could not jostled each other for standing room outside the enclosure.

Trumpeters and heralds announced the names of challengers and defenders, who, clad in armour, their helmets crested by waving ostrich plumes, rode forward on "high bounding" horses richly caparisoned in velvet trappings. At the foot of the gallery stairs the competitors made obeisance to the Queen, whilst attendant squires presented their banners, and made request for permission to enter for the forthcoming tournament.

[1] A dummy or dead bird. "As falcon to the lure, away she Flies."—*Venus and Adonis.*

The Maids of Honour had very special interest in the banners, for the old custom of armorial bearings had given place to more fantastic devices. Many of the emblematical pictures bore intended reference to the Queen, coupled with the expression of the tilters' hopes and fears concerning her attitude.

Over and over again was Elizabeth typified as the sun, whose rays reflected either towards or away from some object in representative allusion to the bearer's name or crest. One aspirant presented a white shield, with the inscription "Fatum inscribat Eliza"; another, "a glorious lady in a cloud in the one syd and a sunne in the other; beneath a sacrifice of hands, hartes, armes, pennes, etc."[1]

Courtiers, with lesser aspirations or deeper affections, had spent much time evolving designs which should make direct appeal to the younger Court ladies whose favours they proudly wore. "An amorous affection" was instantly noted in he who displayed "an eye in a heart, with the words 'Vulnus alo.'" Another "doubted not his continual suit would mollify his mistress' heart, which made an eye dropping tears upon a heart" with "Saepre Cadinodo." A courtier who knew he had many rivals showed a number of flies round a lighted candle. One more fortunate proudly showed a letter. "Lege et relege" was his motto.

All eyes turned to Frances Howard when Thomas Coningsby rode up, and halted at the foot of the stairs whilst his squire presented his banner. This bore the device of "a white lion devouring a young coney," beneath the reproachful words, "Call you this Love?"

[1] John Manningham's *Diary*.

Frances grew red: Queen and ladies laughed outright, for none could fail to misunderstand the allusion to the Howard family crest and the pun on Mr. Coningsby's name.

Competitors rode round the enclosure, then challengers and defendants being at opposite ends of the course, they prepared for combat. With visors up and lances couched, at a given signal they ran full tilt, meeting with the shock of encounter in front of the Queen's gallery. Many staves were broken, some riders were unhorsed, but the skill acquired at the quintain enabled most of them to remain in the saddle.

Anything that fell to the ground—helmets, ostrich plumes, stirrups, parts of harness, or even the horses if they and the riders were overthrown—alike were accounted forfeit to the heralds and officers of arms. They could, however, be redeemed for a fixed sum, that of a horse and harness being twenty pounds.

At the end of the tournament the ladies ran down to lead the victors up the steps to the Queen's presence. Elizabeth presented the Earl of Oxford with a tablet of diamonds; Charles Howard with a chain, Sir Henry Lee with a diamond, and Sir Christopher Hatton with a gold bell and chain.

The ladies lost one of their chief favourites when the Earl of Rutland, following the usual custom for young men of good birth, went to travel on the Continent. Though fearing he would offer "his services and good liking to the French ladies," the girls used to write him joint letters, to show that they at any rate were constant in affection.

His close personal friends, Richard Brackinbury,[1] and George Delves[2] one of the gentleman pensioners, also proved good correspondents, not forgetting to give news of the Maids of Honour. Frances Howard, they assured him, continued "in perfect health, beloved and scornfull," and though she still showed indifference to Thomas Coningsby, yet so great was his affection that the Court generally thought that in the end she would relent towards him. Lady Elizabeth Hastings had been ill and lost her looks.

Of the Earl of Rutland's special favourite, Delves wrote reassuring news: "Mrs. Holcroft is without love or any liking of her to my thinking. She is the very old woman she was, for I cannot get more familiarity, except you give it me by your credit and direction."[3]

During the Earl of Rutland's absence an event occurred that shattered the hearts of the Maids of Honour at one blow, the reason whereof Lord St. John hastened to tell:

"Th' Erle of Oxenforde hathe gotten hym a wyffe—or at least a wyffe hathe caught hym. That is Mrs. Anne Cecille, whearunto the Queen hathe gyven her consent, the which hath causyed great wypping, waling, and sorowful chere, of those that hoped to have hade that golden daye. Thus you way see whylst that some triumphe with oliphe branchis, others folowe the chariot with wyllowe garlands."[4]

[1] Son of Anthony Brackinbury of Denton.
[2] George, fourth son of Sir George Delves, Sheriff of Cheshire.
[3] Hist. MSS. Commission. Duke of Rutland's MSS.
[4] *Ibid.*

Ann Cecil received the envious congratulations of her friends, but Lord Burleigh who had been the Earl of Oxford's guardian during his minority and loved him as a son, was not without misgivings. There had been some talk of a marriage between Ann and Mr. Philip Sidney, whom Lord Burleigh held in high esteem; but nothing definite had been concluded as Ann's father wished her to see more of the world, and not to marry before the age of sixteen. Ann, however, decided for herself, and when the Earl of Oxford, so universally adored in the privy chamber, offered her his heart she accepted it in triumph.

Ann Cecil was not the only bride at the Palace, for Mary Howard became the wife of Lord Dudley, Catherine Bridges married Lord Sandes, and Lady Elizabeth Hastings Lord Herbert, who reconciled what the Queen said she had hitherto believed impossible, "a stiff papist to a good subject." Elizabeth Stafford, seeing so many of her friends leave, announced that she was "weary of the spite of the Court," and intended to marry Sir William Drury of Hawsted in Suffolk, whom her friends considered would make her a suitable husband.

Mary Howard, who at this time of general matrimony gave her hand to Lord Dudley, had some years earlier figured in a sensational case. Common report would have it that she and a certain Mr. Thomas Southwell[1] had contracted a secret marriage, and though both parties indignantly denied it, the rumour persisted, till at length

[1] s. Sir R. Southwell, Master of the Rolls to Henry VIII.

no less a person than the Archbishop of Canterbury intervened to prove the validity of the supposed marriage. Mary Howard, on being examined, admitted that Thomas Southwell "was a suter to her divers and sundrie tymes in the waie of marriage,"[1] but she denied ordering her wedding dress, and "did not professe to the saied Mr. Southwell that if ever she maried any she wold mary him."

Thomas Southwell, for his part, declared "that he never uttered any words to the saied mistris Marie that shold induce any contracte of matrimonie betwene him and the same Mistris Mary."

After due deliberation, the Archbishop decided that there was not sufficient evidence to prove the marriage and the two young people who so earnestly desired not to spend the rest of their lives together were free.

The Earl of Rutland, returning at a time when there was so much marrying and giving in marriage, came to an understanding with Isabel Holcroft. Isabel, a practical young lady, wrote to tell her mother of the happiness that had come into her life, and to ask the amount of her dowry.

Julyan, Lady Holcroft replied to her prospective son-in-law:

"I have long heard of the great good wille that you have borne to my daughter, and of your mind to make her your wife. She has now told me that you are fully determined, and she asks what I will give her. She desires

[1] Matthew Parker's *Register*, published by The Canterbury and York Society.

a very great sum of money, but says that you will marry her whether I give anything or no. If I may be satisfied by yourself of this, I will you her demand if you will take it in reasonable time."[1]

Ann Cecil's married life did not bring the happiness that she, and all the ladies of the privy chamber, thought would come to the lucky maiden who became the Earl of Oxford's wife. Ann "was virtuous; but he a great spender," and there were troubles almost from the first. The Earl, recklessly extravagant, was angered because Lord Burleigh did not do more for him, and in revenge spread abroad lies concerning his own wife and her father. Ann, in distress at these totally unfounded reports, absented herself from the Court she had recently left in such elated circumstances. Lord Burleigh fearing that his daughter's absence might be misconstrued, wrote assuring the Queen of her innocence. Ann was and always would be, "her majesty's most humble young servant, as one that was toward her majesty, in dutiful Love and Fear, yea, in fervent Admiration of her Graces, to contend with any of her equals."[2]

Elizabeth's attitude towards the Earl varied; sometimes she rated him soundly, at others she flirted with him so openly that Lady Burleigh, resenting the slight on her newly married daughter, tried to make her husband interfere, "but at all theise love matters my Lord Treasurer winketh, and will not meddle anyway."

The breach between the Earl and his wife's family

[1] Hist. MSS. Commission. Duke of Rutland's MSS.

[2] Strype's *Annals of the Reformation.*

widened after the execution of the Duke of Norfolk.[1] Lord Oxford considered Burleigh could have saved his friend if he liked, and in a fit of passion declared he would ruin the Lord Treasurer's daughter. In pursuit of vengeance he not only forsook Ann, but started to dissipate his fortune with a recklessness that occasioned the Queen's displeasure.

Ann was always ready to forget the past and let bygones be bygones, but though there were occasional reconciliations they were never of long duration. After one of these brief interludes Ann wrote in despair to her husband:

"My Lord, in what misery I may accuse myself to be that neither I can see any end thereof, nor yet any hope, how to diminish it. And now of late having some hope in my own conceit, that your lordship would have renewed some part of your favour that you began to show to me this summer, when you made me assurance of your good meaning, though you seemed fearful how to shew it by open actions. Now after long silence of hearing anything from you, at length I am informed (but how bitterly I know not and yet how uncomfortably I do feel it) that your lordship is entered into some new misliking of me, without any cause in deed or thought. And therefore my good lord, I beseech you, in the name of God that knows my thoughts, my love towards you, notwithstanding your evil meaning towards me, upon what cause you are moved to continue me in this misery; and what you would have me to do in my power, and to recover your constant favour, so as your lordship may not be still led to detain me in calamity, without some probable cause; whereof I appeal to God I am utterly innocent."[2]

[1] Thomas Howard, 4th Duke of Norfolk. Executed for his complicity with Mary, Queen of Scots, 1572.

[2] Strype's *Annals of the Reformation.*

CHAPTER X

ON March 19th, 1572, Elizabeth kept her Maundy[1] at Greenwich, the great hall being swept and garnished for the occasion. At the upper end stood a table for the chaplain, with a pile of soft cushions and a praying stool, in front for the Queen. Opposite were long tables laden with gifts, whilst ranged against the walls were benches for the beneficiaries.

All being ready, into the hall hobbled thirty-nine old women who sat down on the forms, endeavouring to look as little self-conscious as possible under exceptionally trying circumstances. Towards them pompously advanced the yeoman of the laundry; washed and dried the thirty-nine old ladies' feet, finally imprinting a chaste kiss on each of their horny big toes. In imitation came the almoner, followed in turn by the sub-almoner.

These preliminaries ended, the Queen entered, magnificent in black velvet, followed in procession by thirty-nine ladies of the privy chamber. At the conclusion of the special service, the ladies went towards the long tables, girded themselves with aprons, and taking up thirty-nine basins filled with warm water and floating flowers prepared to attend the Queen.

Thirty-nine acutely nervous old ladies wriggled their feet among the rushes as the Queen knelt down before

[1] This ceremony, common to most Christian countries, was kept in remembrance of Christ's washing his disciples' feet. The sovereigns publicly washed the feet of their poorest subjects of numbers commensurate with the ruler's age.

them one by one, and washed, dried, crossed and kissed their great toes.

Meanwhile the ladies had each taken a dress length of broadcloth which the Queen presented on her next tour of the benches. At the third round the girls each handed her a pair of shoes; for the fourth they carried wooden platters containing sides of salmon, ling, six red herrings and two loaves of bread; fifthly, bottles of wine; whilst at the sixth each lady in turn took off her apron which the Queen presented to the old lady whose gifts the girl had carried. The ladies then returned to their places, whilst the Queen, making the last round unattended, presented white leather purses containing thirty-nine pence, and a like number of red ones holding twenty shillings. Then back to their private apartments went Elizabeth and her ladies, whilst the thirty-nine old ladies thankfully put their much-washed feet into their woollen hose.

The reiterance made of her thirty-nine years was the least pleasing part of the Maundy ceremony to Elizabeth, who much disliked anything that called attention to the passage of time. She had been much put out by the behaviour of three of her rejected suitors who had recently taken unto themselves wives. Thereby they caused extreme annoyance to the virgin Queen of England, who liked to imagine them languishing in single blessedness; when, instead, they wedded less exacting princesses, Elizabeth conceived herself very grievously affronted.

The King of France being one of the defaulting bachelors, his mother, Catherine de' Medici, suggested as substitute her second son, the youthful Duke of Anjou,

nineteen years Elizabeth's junior. According to the protestations of his mother and her Ambassador, Anjou was represented as being ardently in love with the English Queen of whose beauty he had heard so much.

So long as the courtship could be conducted by proxy all went well, but a serious hitch occurred when Elizabeth expressed a wish to see the prince in person. This, unfortunately for Catherine de' Medici, could not be managed without her son's consent, and when approached thereon, Anjou not only flatly refused to go and see the lady of his mother's choice, but in emphatically uncomplimentary terms he utterly refused to marry her.

Elizabeth, though so serenely confident of her charms that she saw nothing incongruous in the idea of a husband young enough to be her son, none the less shivered at the prospect of old age, and clutched at any project likely to avert it. A wily Dutchman, having knowledge of the Queen's vanity and love of money, lured her with promises of a wonderful elixir which would not only ensure perpetual youth, but also transmute base metal into gold. Elizabeth, lending a credulously hopeful ear to these attractive suggestions, provided the magician with a laboratory at Somerset House and bade him proceed with all possible speed. The alchemist set up his crucibles; made a prodigious amount of noise; improvised divers unpleasant smells, but produced nothing of material value.

Elizabeth became impatient; unwillingly she saw the crow's-feet forming round her eyes, and the glory departing from her red-gold hair; urgently she wanted the elixir.

The Dutchman made more noise and worse smells, but no elixir. Elizabeth lost her temper: the magician received an ultimatum—the elixir or the Tower—noise and smells no longer availed him, and to the Tower forthwith he departed.

Dr. Dee, the Mortlake astronomer, met with better success, largely owing to his friendship with Mrs. Blanche Parry, who caused him to be sent for with all haste when an event occurred which seemingly threatened the Queen's life. Someone walking in Lincoln's Inn Fields chanced on a waxen image of the Queen stuck through and through with pins. At the sight thereof the hearts of the stoutest privy councillors quailed within them. Clearly it betokened witchcraft of a most malignant kind, and unless one could be found who wrought cunningly in such matters the Queen must assuredly die.

Dr. Dee found a weak-kneed Court: he examined the image, confirmed the gravity of its import, but bade his hearers take heart, for he alone could counteract the spells of witchery. With pompous solemnity he made incantations and performed mystic rites, with such eminent success that, though the vital parts of her wax prototype were riddled through and through with pins, the Queen's health remained unimpaired, and Dr. Dee's reputation was established.

Dr. Dee's house faced the river at Mortlake, and when the Court was in residence at Richmond the Maids of Honour would coax Mrs. Blanche to take them over that they might peer into the dark shroudings of the future. Every inch a magician looked Dr. Dee, a tall, thin man in

a long black robe, with a skull cap on his bald pate, and a long white beard flowing down his breast. His surroundings were every whit as awesome as his appearance, and the half-frightened girls clutched one another nervously as they entered the dark library full of parchments, globes, scales, crucibles and other outward signs of occult mysteries.

Chief attractions in the girls' eyes were the magic crystal wherein they might see pooled the vista of the future, and the famous mirror within whose ebony frame they expected to behold the features of their future husbands.

Elizabeth heard such accounts of the mirror from her ladies that she must needs see it herself. In consequence, one windy March day a gay company from the Court cantered over the fields from Richmond to visit the gratified Dr. Dee, who made note of the occasion:

"The Queen's majestie, with her most honourable Privy Council, and other of her Lords and nobility, came purposely to have visited my library: but finding that my wife was within four hours before buried out of the house, her Majestie refused to come in, but willed to fetch my glass so famous, and show unto her some of the properties of it, which I did; her Majestie being taken down from her horse by the Earle of Leicester, Master of the Horse, at the Church wall of Mortlake, did see some of the properties of that glass to her Majestie's great contentment and delight."[1]

If Elizabeth saw a man's face in the mirror she kept the knowledge to herself; in any case it is not likely to have

[1] Dr. Dee's *Compendious Memorial.*

been that of the Duke of Anjou or the Earl of Leicester. It is true negotiations for the French match still went on, and that Leicester openly protested his devotion as of yore, but neither suitor proffered suit in any sincerity.

Leicester had at length realized that he would never occupy the proud position of Queen's consort; but, though he still wished to retain the position of chief favourite, he very seriously imperilled his position by flirtations among the ladies.

Frances Howard and her married sister Douglas (Lady Sheffield) were hot rivals for his notice. They showed their feelings so openly that Lord Talbot[1] commented on the matter in a letter to his father, the Earl of Shrewsbury:

"My Lord of Leicester is very much with her majesty and she shews the same good affection to him that she was wont; of late he has endeavoured to please her more than heretofore. There are two sisters now in the Court that are very far in love with him, as they have been long; my Lady Sheffield and Frances Howard; they (of like striving who shall love him better) are at great wars together, and the Queen thinketh not well of them nor better of him."[2]

Leicester made use of both ladies, and when he fell into disgrace with the Queen he persuaded Frances Howard to assist in a stratagem by which he hoped to regain favour. Writing a letter "in all fraud and base dissimulation," he addressed it to Lord Burleigh, arranging that Frances

[1] Gilbert, second son of 6th Earl of Shrewsbury, m. Mary Cavendish, daughter of "Bess of Hardwick," his stepmother; suc. his father as Earl of Shrewsbury.

[2] Lodge's *Illustrations*, Vol. II.

should give it to him in the Queen's presence in such a way that she should not fail to observe the transaction.

Frances waited till Burleigh had nearly reached the door of the audience chamber, when she stepped forward to hand him the letter in seeming secrecy, "and to draw the eye and attention of her Highness the more unto it, she let fall the paper before it touched the treasurer's hand."[1]

Elizabeth instantly commanded the note to be brought to her, but on reading it she quickly saw through the ruse, and refused to take the contents seriously.

In the end Lady Sheffield triumphed over her unmarried sister, so that, when Lord Sheffield died, scandal cast dark rumours as to my Lord of Leicester's proficiency in the subtle art of poisoning.

The period of mourning ended, Douglas expected that Leicester would take steps to make her his lawful wife. To her dismay he evinced no particular anxiety to do anything of the sort. As an excuse he alleged the Queen's anger, consequent on the fact that, though Elizabeth did not mean to marry him herself, she would very vehemently object to his being the husband of any other woman.

Lady Sheffield, however, became insistent, and eventually Leicester reluctantly agreed to a secret marriage at Esher, a few days before the birth of their child.[2]

[1] Lycester's *Commonwealth*.
[2] Lord Robert Dudley, 1573–1649.

CHAPTER XI

THE Duke of Anjou's positive refusal to take unto himself a bride so many years his senior placed his mother and the French Ambassador in an extremely difficult position. To tell Elizabeth the truth was, of course, entirely out of the question, but even two such practised dissimulators found a really plausible lie difficult to come by. Eventually they decided to make the difference in religion a pretext, representing the Duke as an implacable Catholic who would require all the outward pomp and ceremonial attendant on Roman Catholic observances.

Elizabeth at once said that in a Protestant country this could not be; the Prince might worship as he pleased in private, but outwardly he must conform to the established religion. The ambassador, much relieved at this attitude, professed himself desolate: the Duke of Anjou would be heart-broken, so tenderly was he attached to the most beautiful Princess in Europe, but, undoubtedly, he would sacrifice himself for his religion—such was the devoutness of French princes.

Catherine de' Medici, loath to forgo the prospect of being mother-in-law to the Queen of England, suggested to Fénelon that her youngest son should be offered as a substitute for his brother. The ambassador accordingly "began to tickle Queen Elizabeth's ears with love-stories about her marriage with Alençon."[1] Artfully he described how the young Duke had conceived a romantic affection

[1] Camden.

for the beautiful Virgin Queen, and he entreated permission to pay his addresses. Should this, the darling wish of his heart be acceded to, he promised accommodation on the score of religion.

The new suitor was an ugly, undersized boy of seventeen, with an abnormally large nose, and a face deeply pitted with small-pox. This last proved the greatest detriment in Elizabeth's eyes. The Ambassador could slur over the disparity in age by representing that Alençon looked fully ten years older than he was, whilst she appeared far more than ten years less than hers, but pock-marks were a very material matter to which Elizabeth returned over and over again.

Catherine de' Medici gave positive assurance that the marks were negligible, and could easily be cured by a physician deeply skilled in restoring ruined complexions. He should set to work at once on the face of a pock-marked page; if he proved successful, as doubtless he would, he should proceed forthwith on the countenance of Alençon. Before this design could be put in execution the young prince developed measles, when his mother hastened to convey the gratifying tidings that the rash of the new disease had completely obliterated the scars of the former.

Elizabeth knew only too well how often the scourge of small-pox left its victim disfigured for life. She had been attacked by it herself and, though she recovered without blemish, Lady Mary Sidney[1] who nursed her devotedly,

[1] d. of sister of the Earl of Leicester and wife of Sir Henry Sidney, mother of Sir Philip Sidney.

and eventually contracted the disease, was by no means so fortunate.

Sir Henry Sidney seeing her for the first time, wrote in dismay: "When I went to Newhaven, I left her a full fair lady, in mine eye at least the fairest, and when I returned I found her as foul a lady as the small-pox could make her; which she did take by continual attendance of her Majesty's most precious person."[1]

The loss of her beauty caused Lady Mary to shun society as much as possible, and to live a retired life in the country. When Sir Henry Sidney became Lord President of Wales he and his family took up their residence at Ludlow Castle. There on February 22nd, 1575, they suffered a sad loss in the death of their younger daughter, Ambrozia. Elizabeth writing the bereaved parents a letter of condolence, made mention of their elder girl Mary:

"He hath left unto you the comfort of one daughter of very good hope, whom, if you shall think good to remove from those parts of unpleasant air, if it be so, into better in these parts, and will send her unto us before Easter, or when you shall think good, assure yourself that we will have a special care of her, not doubting but, as you are well persuaded of our favour towards yourself, so will we make further demonstration thereof in her; if you will send her unto us, and so comforting you for the one, and leaving this our offer of goodwill to your own consideration for the other we commit you to Almighty God."[2]

Mary of the tawny hair welcomed the idea of going to Court for the opportunity it afforded for companionship

[1] *Calendar of Domestic State Papers.* [2] *Ibid.*

Coll. of Duke of Buccleuch *Photo Victoria and Albert Museum*

MARY SYDNEY, COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE

with her beloved brother Philip. The bond between the two was unusually close, for they had been educated together, growing up with kindred interests and an abiding interest in literature. Mary, who had studied Latin, Greek and Hebrew, had her praises sung by Philip Sidney's poet friend, Edmund Spenser, in his poem "Colin Clout's Come Home Again."

"Urania sister unto Astrophel
Into whose brave mind, as in a golden Coffer.
All heavenly gifts and riches locked are,
More rich than pearls of Ind or gold of Ophir,
And in her sex more wonderful and rare."

Philip Sidney's two chief friends at Court were his old school friend, Fulke Greville,[1] and Edward Dyer,[2] both men of studious tastes like his. Dyer, who shared with Sidney the honour of being "the two very diamondes of her maiesties Court for many special and rare qualities,"[3] wrote a poem to prove that a contented mind held the secret of happiness:

"My mind to me a kingdom is,
Such present joys therein I find,
That it excels all other bliss
That earth affords or grows by kind:
Though much I want which most would have,
Yet still my mind forbids to crave," etc.

[1] Son of Sir Fulke Greville. Entered Shrewsbury School the same day as Philip Sidney, Chancellor of the Exchequer under James I, who created him Lord Brooke, died 1628.

[2] Son of Sir Thos. Dyer, of Somerset.

[3] Gabriel Harvey to Spenser. (Three Proper and Wittie Familiar Letters.)

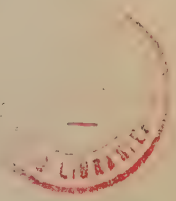
Both Philip and Mary Sidney were with the Queen when she paid a nineteen days' visit to their uncle, the Earl of Leicester, at Kenilworth Castle. Great festivities were prepared in honour of the occasion, including pageants, plays, bear baitings, fireworks, dancing and sumptuous banquets.

On leaving Kenilworth, Elizabeth went on to Chartley to see her cousin, the Countess of Essex, who, in the absence of her lord in Ireland, entertained the large party of guests. Married life and motherhood had in no wise diminished the charm of beautiful Lettice Knollys, and the Earl of Leicester fell once more under her spell. He had tired of his second wife, Lady Sheffield, and desired to repudiate his secret marriage at Esher, but Douglas, despite bribes or threats, utterly refused to disavow it, for the honour of her son. It had been contrived with such secrecy that Leicester had little to fear on that score; on the other hand, he would have a great deal to fear if the Queen discovered he had embarked on a second flirtation with the Countess of Essex. Both were circumspect, but the old flame which had begun in farce flickered up again, to flare in earnest, after the death of the Earl of Essex.

Lettice Knollys's children had inherited their mother's good looks, the elder girl, Penelope, already at twelve giving promise of becoming an exceptionally beautiful woman. The Earl of Essex hoped to arrange a marriage between her and Philip Sidney, but the young man of twenty thought more of literary ambitions than the vivacious child who might one day be his bride. A few

years later he bitterly reproached himself for his blindness at this first meeting with the "Stella" of his sonnets.

"Not at first sight, nor with a dribbled shot,
Love gave the wound which, while I breathe, will bleed:
But known worth did in mine of time proceed,
Till, by degrees, it had full conquest got.
I saw and liked; I liked, but loved not;
I loved, but straight did not what love decreed;
At length to love's decrees I, forced, agreed.
Yet with repining at so partial lot.
Now, e'en that footstep of lost liberty
Is gone, and now, like slave-born Muscovite,
I call it praise to suffer tyranny;
And now employ the remnant of my wit
To make myself believe that all is well,
While, with a feeling skill, I paint my hell."[1]



The Maids of Honour were somewhat aggrieved that three such popular young men as Philip Sidney, Fulke Greville and Edward Dyer should be so indifferent to their charms. Greville, it is true, professed himself "a constant courtier of the ladies," but it was a detached interest which caused the Maids of Honour to make him their scapegoat. He used to say merrily, "that he was like Robin Goodfellow, for when the dairy-maids upset the milk-pans or made a romping and racket, they laid it all on Robin; so whatever gossip-tales the Queen's ladies told her, or whatever bad turns they did to the courtiers, they laid all upon him."[2]

For auburn-haired Philip Sidney the girls had warmer sentiments; indeed, they "ventured as far as modesty

[1] *Astrophel and Stella*, Sonnet 2.
[2] Bacon's *Apophthegms*.

would permit to signify their affection unto him," and showed obvious chagrin at his lack of response.

"Because I breathe not love to every one,
Nor nourish special lockes of vowed hair,
Nor give each speech a full point of a groan,
The courtly nymphs, acquainted with the moan
Of them, who, in their lips, Love's standard bear,
'What he!' say they to me, 'now dare I swear,
He cannot love: no, no; let him alone!' "[1]

If Philip Sidney preferred books to ladies, there were plenty of courtiers of a very different opinion, and the Maids of Honour tossing their pretty heads, chose new servants because they waxed merry.

Young married men looked on disconsolate, and Richard Brackinbury wrote to prepare the Earl of Rutland for a cold reception on his next visit to London.

"When you come to the Court you will scarce be known; so little account do these ladies make of us married men, and especially of those that be absent for 'from new fountains the water semethe the sweetest.' You should be here a month before you could learn to speak to one and not offend the other. Yet there is one of your old acquaintance who would have friendly saluted you—my Lady Sandys."[2]

Eleanor Brydges, who remained in the privy chamber after her sister Catherine married Lord Sands, also retained a friendly feeling for the Earl of Rutland. She

[1] *Astrophel and Stella*, Sonnet LIV.
[2] Duke of Rutland, MSS.

wrote to tell him of the commotion caused by the secret marriage of James Scudamore and Mary Shelton. The Queen in a passion at the discovery of what had taken place, "telt liberall bothe with bloes and yevell words." In fact, she handled the frightened little bride so roughly that she broke her finger. This catastrophe brought Elizabeth to her senses, and in contrition she not only sanctioned the marriage, but appointed the new Mrs. Scudamore as gentlewoman of the bedchamber.

The matrimonial prospects of the Maids of Honour were always followed with interest, and it was observed that Frances Howard, who had quite discarded Thomas Coningsby, had a new admirer in the person of the Earl of Hertford. The faces in the privy chamber had changed since the Earl of Hertford had in his youth courted Lady Catherine Grey in his sister Jane's little sitting-room. Having suffered nine years' imprisonment for the offence of marrying his first wife, it behoved him to walk warily before making a second venture, especially when the lady of his second choice likewise bore relationship to the Queen. Frances Howard, who had flouted so many admirers, felt that at last she had met the man who could make her happy, but as she happened to be a favourite with Elizabeth the possibility of being allowed to marry him did not seem very bright. "No haste is made about Lord Hertford's marriage, yet love increases," wrote Richard Brackinbury in a letter which also conveyed the intelligence that Lady Mary Vere[1] was ill with jaundice, and that there was talk of Mary Sidney marrying

[1] Sister of the Earl of Oxford.

the Earl of Pembroke,[1] though he himself doubted if anything would come of it.

The Earl of Leicester was undoubtedly anxious to arrange such a marriage for his niece, and wrote to her father in Ireland on the matter. Sir Henry Sidney replied:

"I find to my exceeding great comfort, the likelihood of a marriage between my lord of Pembroke and my daughter, which great honour to me, my means lineage and kin, I attribute to my match in your noble house, and serve the same to the uttermost of my power: yea, so joyfully have I at heart that my dear child hath so happy an advancement as this is, as, in troth, I would lie a year in close prison rather than it should break. But, alas! my dearest Lord, mine estate is not unknown to your lordship, which wanteth much to make me equal that which I know my Lord of Pembroke may have. Two thousand pounds, I confess, I have bequeathed her, which your lordship knoweth I might better spare her when I were dead than one thousand living; and in troth, my Lord, I have it not, but borrow it I must, and so I will. And if your lordship will get me leave that I may feast my eyes with that joyful sight of their coupling, I will give her a cup worth five hundred pounds. Good my Lord, bear with my poverty; for if I had it, little would I regard any sum of money, but willingly give it, protesting before Almighty God that if He and all the powers on earth would give me choice of a husband for her, I would choose the Earl of Pembroke. I write to my Lord of Pembroke, which herewith I send your Lordship; and

[1] Henry Herbert repudiated his marriage with Lady Catherine Grey and married Catherine, d. of Earl of Shrewsbury. She died 1575.

thus I end, in answering your most welcome and honourable letter; with my hearty prayer to Almighty God to perfect your lordship's good work, and requite you for the same; for I am not able."[1]

A month or two later the wedding took place, and Mary accompanied her husband to his beautiful home at Wilton, in Wiltshire.

[1] *Sydney Papers*, Vol. I.

CHAPTER XII

ONE broiling hot day towards the end of July, 1578, the Court left London for a progress into Suffolk, the main objective being to pay a visit to Sir William Cordell, Master of the Rolls, at his fine new house at Long Melford.

Forward went the green-clad harbingers; the yeomen of the guard in new red coats with the Tudor rose blazoned on their backs; gentlemen pensioners carrying their gilt battle-axes; noblemen and courtiers, richly dressed, riding according to their degrees, and followed by serving-men wearing their master's badge in silver on their left arms.

Elizabeth more from pride than inclination rode in her coach, lavish with paint and gold, adorned with ostrich feathers, upholstered grandly, studded by gilt nails; of magnificent appearance, but extreme discomfort.

Owing to the badness of the roads, the coach not infrequently stuck in deep ruts or holes. In the worst places serving-men supported it on either side with their shoulders, as the only means by which the right royal vehicle could be made to retain its equilibrium.

The Maids of Honour, who were not yet allowed the privilege of being shaken in a coach, trotted along on their saddle horses. Behind came a seemingly endless line of riders, terminating in two or three hundred luggage carts, toiling painfully along in clouds of dust.

All other travellers "gave the road" to the royal party, whether the long covered waggons of the carriers, strings

of pack horses laden with merchandise, country gentlemen, or troupes of actors with their property carts.

News of the Queen's coming caused the road to be unusually populated with rogues and vagabonds who assembled in hopes of picking up an honest or dishonest penny. Vagrants in variety roamed the country-side, begging or stealing when or how they could. If caught, the penalty for a first offence was branding through the right ear with a hot iron. A second conviction entailed like treatment of the left; a third meant death. Of all denominations were they: fortune-tellers, bear-wards, rufflers, upright men, Hookers and Anglers, Priggers, fresh-water mariners, who had never seen the sea. Wildest looking of all was an Abraham man, a half-witted, scantily clad creature, one "that walketh bare armed, and bare legged, and fayneth hym selfe mad, and caryeth a packe of wool, or a stycke with baken on it, or such lyke toy, and nameth himselfe poore Tom."[1]

On village commons, where fly-tormented beeves sought shelter under the trees, and the braying of a stray donkey in the pound spread consternation among hundreds of Court horses, Elizabeth halted her coach. Seated in state, the leathern curtains drawn back, she spoke with the villagers who crowded round the Queen they loved so well. She learnt of their desires or hardships, received petitions, heard grievances, for during progresses the humblest subject might approach and state his case without let or hindrance, in simple faith that "Good Queen Bess" would put things right.

[1] *The Fraternitye of Vagabonds*, John Audley, 1575.

Whilst Elizabeth dispensed justice, the Maids of Honour were importuned by ballad singers, entreating them to give ear to a very passionate and beautiful ballad of "A Lover extolling his lady." Or they might have their choice of "A merry Ballad of how a wife entreated her husband to have her own Will"; "A ballad of a priest that lost his nose, For saying of mass as I suppose," The Lady Greensleeves, or "The lamentable ditty of The Babes in the Wood."

When ballad singers ceased from troubling, the travelling pedlars displayed the contents of their packs.

> "Lawn as white as driven snow;
> Cyprus black as e'er was crow;
> Gloves as sweet as damask roses.
> Masks for faces and for noses;
> Bugle-bracelets, necklace-amber,
> Perfume for a lady's chamber;
> Golden quoifs and stomachers,
> For my lads to give their dears;
> Pins and poking-sticks of steel;
> What maids lack from head to heel:
> Come buy of me, come buy, come buy."[1]

On again; over lonely heaths where the remains of highwaymen clanked in chains; across waste land, scaring white-tailed conies who scudded for safety under yellow gorse bushes; skirting marshlands where lonely herons kept vigil among the rushes; through the deep silence of vast woodlands where shrill-voiced jays heralded the intrusion of their solitude.

In leafy dells, where the sun slanted through the tree-

[1] *The Winter's Tale*, IV, 3.

tops, the travellers halted to picnic. The Queen and her ladies couched themselves among the bracken fronds, watching the squirrels who scudded along the branches, and using their long plumed fans to defend themselves from myriads of flies, whilst the serving-men unpacked provision baskets.

The thirsty ladies appreciated their draughts of cool nut-brown beer, however much individual tastes differed as to the merits of the varieties known as Huff-cap, Angels-food, or Dragon's milk. "Though for quaffing as it was unfitting her sex, so she extreamely abhord it,"[1] still when thirsty, Elizabeth desired a full tankard.

One never-to-be-forgotten progress there was trouble over the beer; of the resulting effect on the Queen Majesty's temper Leicester wrote to Lord Burleigh:

"God be thanked, she is very merry. But at her first coming, being a marvelous hott day at her coming hither, not one drop of good drink for her, so ill was she proyded for, not with standing her oft telling of her comyng hither; but we were fain to send to London with bottells, to Kenelworth, to divers other places where ale was. Her own here was such as there was no man able to drink it; it had been as good to have drunk malmsey; and yet was it laid in about three days before her majesty came. It did put her very farr out of temper, and almost all the company besides so; for none of us all was able to drink either bere or ale here. Synce by chance we have found drink for her to her lyking she is well agayn; but I feared greatly two or three days, some sickness to have fallen by reason of this drynk."[2]

[1] *England's Mourning Garment*, Henry Chettle.
[2] Wright's *Queen Elizabeth*.

On the borders of Suffolk awaited the Sheriff, Sir William Spring, accompanied by "two hundred young gentlemen clad, all in white velvet, and three hundred of the graver sort apparelled in black velvet coats and fair chains, all ready at one instant and place, with fifteen hundred serving men more on horseback, well and bravely mounted in good order, ready to receive the Queenes Highness into Suffolk, which surely was a comely troupe, and a noble sight to behold."[1]

Merrily chimed the bells from the old grey church on the hill as the Queen entered the decorated village of Long Melford. Husbandmen left their oxen, goodwives their wash-tubs, children their play, to watch the Queen's dust-covered coach as it rumbled past the village and splashed through the ford. The six foam-flecked horses put their necks into their collars, to pull the heavy vehicle up the last bit of hill, before they turned in under the gate-house, over the moat, and into the courtyard where Lady Cordell awaited her illustrious visitor.

Weary Maids of Honour slipped thankfully from their saddles, and made their way to the room at the top of the house which had been allotted for their dormitory. Removing sticky riding masks, they cooled their hot cheeks in bowls of clear spring water, brushed the dust from their hair and exchanged heavy travelling clothes for crisp fresh dresses.

When the Queen had rested, Sir William Cordell escorted her to the turreted banqueting house overlooking the bowling green, where several courtiers had already

[1] Thomas Churchyard's Tract.

started their favourite game. The Maids of Honour, not in attendance for the moment, strolled round the lovely garden where apricots ripened on the sunny walls. Reaching the fishponds, whose cool, still depths reflected the capped towers of the hall, they sat on the grassy banks to rest and talk. Ever and anon fish jumped for their evening meal; shy water hens dived at the sound of human laughter; rooks circled overhead leaving the rookery for their evening flight. From the park came the thud of hammers as tents were erected, mingling with the hissing of grooms as they rubbed down the tired horses in the stable yard.

Veritable Queen's weather it proved during those early August days, when the Suffolk gentry "made such triumphs and devices as indeed was most noble to behold and very thankfully accepted." Day after day the royal party rode single file down narrow country lanes, where blackberries hung in clusters, to pay visits to one country house after another.

The most enjoyable outing for the Maids of Honour was to their old friend Elizabeth Stafford, now the wife of Sir William Drury. At her home at Hawsted House Elizabeth welcomed her mistress and many friends of her girlhood days. On the terrace overlooking the moat the visitors sat and talked, or tried to make friends with Lady Drury's four stiff-dressed, bonny children.

Sir William had planted the banks of the moat with yews and variegated holly, and the Queen, being called on to admire this innovation, had the misfortune to drop her silver-handled fan into the water, from whence it could

not be recovered. Lady Drury and the ladies joined in a chorus of dismay, but the Queen good-humouredly refused to let the loss of a mere fan mar the pleasure of her visit, and graciously accepted one of the many substitutes offered for her acceptance.

Lady Drury, who had always been a favourite with the Queen, retained a high place in her regard, and when Sir William Drury[1] died a few years later she wrote her former Maid of Honour a letter of sympathy :

"Bee well ware, my Bess, you strive not with divine ordinance, nor grudge at irremediable harmes, leste you offend the highest Lorde, and no whitte amend ye married hap. Heape not your harmes where helpe ther is none; but since you may not that you would, wish that you can enjoye with comfort, a king for his power, and a Queene for her love, who leves not now to protecte you when your case requires care, and minds not to omitte whatever may be best for you and yours.

Your most loving careful sovraigne."[2]

The French envoys sent to further the marriage negotiations between Elizabeth and the Duke d' Alençon, not finding the Queen at Whitehall, came on to Melford. Elizabeth received them graciously, and proffered an invitation to dinner, an act of hospitality they readily accepted.

Sir William Cordell's cooks rose to the occasion and prepared an elaborate banquet, whilst waiters laid the tables

[1] Sir William Drury killed in a duel caused by a quarrel about precedency, 1589. Lady Drury married, 2ndly, Sir John Scott.

[2] Nichols' *Progresses*, Vol. II.

and sideboards with gilt bowls, silver tankards, ornamental salts, crystal and silver glasses, and the rest of the Court plate.

Elizabeth entered the room during the meal; but, though her bearing to the guests was all affability, the ladies in attendance guessed that something had occurred to displease her. Once out of hearing of the French envoys, the Queen flew into a rage because the sideboards had not contained a sufficient display of plate to impress the royal visitors. Having discovered the cause, the ladies lost no time in sending for the Earl of Sussex, who as the Lord Steward was the rightful object for their mistress's wrath.

He received it at full blast; Elizabeth furiously upbraiding him for not having brought sufficiency of gold and silver vessels, so that, wheresoever the Queen of England might be, all foreigners should be reduced to a suitable state of envy and despair at her magnificence.

The Earl of Sussex, not to be browbeaten, replied that, though he had accompanied English sovereigns on their progresses for many years, not even her father, King Henry VIII, had carried so much plate as she did at present.

Elizabeth, who resented excuses adequate or otherwise, told the Lord Steward "that he was a great rogue, and that the more good that was done to people like him the worse they got."[1] Turning to Lord North, she asked him if he considered the sideboards contained much or little plate.

[1] *Calendar of State Papers*, Spanish.

Lord North disparaged the plate, and whilst the Queen continued her tirade the two nobles glared at each other, and their thoughts had none of the Christian virtues.

Outside the presence chamber their pent-up feelings burst forth. Sussex told Lord North "he had spoken wrongly and falsely in what he said to the Queen, whereupon North replied that if he, Sussex, did not belong to the Council he would prove what he said to his teeth. Sussex then went to Leicester and complained of the knavish behaviour of North, but Leicester told him that the words he used should not be applied to such persons as North. Sussex answered that, whatever he might think of the words, North was a great knave, so they remained offended with one another as they had been before on other matters."[1]

Quickly the quarrel spread; the Earl of Oxford receiving a message from the Queen asking him to dance before the visitors, said flatly that he did not wish to entertain Frenchmen. This being softened in transmission to Elizabeth, caused her to repeat the request, when the Earl flung himself out of the room in a temper declaring he was not going to do anything that would give pleasure to Frenchmen.

Eventually some sort of reconciliation was patched up for the remainder of the progress, but Elizabeth determined that sooner or later Alençon's envoys should be properly impressed, and on the Court's return to London in September she immediately arranged a round of festivities.

[1] *Calendar of State Papers*, Spanish.

CHAPTER XIII

THE Maids of Honour on looking out of their dormitory window one morning, found that the ice Queen had waved her wand during the night, transforming the palace garden at Richmond into an enchanted Fairyland. Trees and shrubs alike bent under their glistening coating; smoothly white were the lawns running down to the river, which flowed greyly between its snow-clad banks.

Softly, silently, fell the snowflakes, dulling sound and blotting out the landscape. Visitors who managed to get down from London reported that snow lay two feet deep in the city; whilst deplorable accounts were received daily from the country of loss of life to both man and beast from the snow-drifts.

Within doors the ladies amused themselves as best they could. They arranged vigorous matches of battledore and shuttlecock; tried their skill at trolling the ball in "Troll-madam,"[1] or the ever popular slide-thrift.

In the evenings were various entertainments which taxed the resources of Edward Tilney, Master of the Revels, who had to provide all stage properties. These received such hard usage that they required constant "Ayring, Repayring, spungyng, wyping, brushing, sorting, suting, (and) putting in order."[2]

[1] Played on a board with eleven holes at the end. *Aut:* A fellow, sir, that I have known to go about with troll-mydames.—*The Winter's Tale*, IV, 2.

[2] Documents relating to the Office of Revels, A. Feuillerat.

The Master of the Revels needed to be a man of resource, for the actors were frequently exacting in the nature of their demands. One company sent in a request for "Hobby horses, wheat sheaves, bodies of men in timber, dishes for devil's eyes, devices for hell, the hell-mouth." Another set of players could not perform without a vizard for an ape's face; also a monster; seven dozen imitation eggs, sham whiting, mackerel, flounders and snowballs. The Earl of Leicester's company proved insistent for a vizard with a black beard; one similar with a red beard, and sufficient fir poles to represent a forest. Others clamoured for a device for counterfeiting Thunder and Lightning, a country-house, a city, a live fox and a wax cake.

When properties were not in stock they had to be made, and the Earl of Warwick's actors being about to present "The history of the Burnyng Rock," were particular that the rock should be adequately represented. The Master of Revels, wishful to please, borrowed a cloud for the purpose; thereafter trouble and expense fell heavily upon him.

Painters set to work to transform the cloud into a rock, but the paint refused to dry, so fires had to be kept burning day and night. As it still partook more of a cloud than rock in appearance, a load of ivy was sent for, to cover its obvious deficiencies. Then aqua-vitæ being burnt on the rock, twelvepence had to be expended in order "to alay the smell thereof."

The next performers raised trouble over the damaged cloud, so Edward Tilney had to get "a hoope and blewe

lynnen cloth to mend the cloude that was borowed and cut to serve the rock in the plaie of the burning knight."[1]

Often there arose difficulty in recovering the properties, much bitterness arising over six silver horns "which horns the maskers detayned and yet doth keep them against the will of the officers."

During the New Year festivities, especially elaborate in honour of the French envoys, the Maids of Honour and their special friends among the courtiers arranged a double masque of Amazons and Knights. The girls wore helmets, yellow buskins and suits of silver-gilt armour, over lawn and crimson velvet skirts. They carried javelins and shields, the latter causing much amusement, as, following the fashion at tournaments, each lady bore a device and motto of her own choosing.

The knights appeared in burnished armour and plumed helmets. They carried truncheons, and like the Amazons shields with "a poesy written on every one of them." The masque ended in a miniature fight at barriers, the ladies being adjudged victors.

Alençon heard such accounts of Elizabeth's wealth from the much fêted envoys, that he became more and more anxious to secure her for his bride. For the furtherance of his suit, he sent over Monsieur Simier, "a man of wit and parts, and one thoroughly versed in love-fancies, pleasant conceits, and other gallantries."[2]

The witty, vivacious Frenchman soon found his way

[1] Documents of the Revels' Office, P. Cunningham.
[2] Camden's *Annales*.

into the Queen's good graces, and she lavished such flattering attentions upon him that for once the incensed favourites made common cause together. Being quite unable to see the attractions of Monsieur Simier, who bowed so gracefully as he kissed the Queen's finger-tips, they unanimously attributed his success to witchcraft. By the unholy possession of love philtres he had charmed Elizabeth's affections away from them—the rightful objects for her favours.

The Earl of Leicester, in particular, showed such open enmity to the visitor that, when Monsieur Simier's spies apprised him of the fact that my Lord was secretly married to the widowed Countess of Essex[1] he used the information to put him out of Court by telling the Queen.

Elizabeth, in her anger at the news, ordered the Earl to be confined at a fort in Greenwich Park, and would have sent him to the Tower had not the Earl of Sussex, his lifelong enemy, once again intervened to pacify the Queen, "being of opinion that no man was to be troubled for lawful marriage, which amongst all men had ever been held in honour and esteem."[2]

Leicester regained his freedom, and a partial return to favour, but towards her former friend, Lettice Knollys, Elizabeth remained implacable. The new Countess of Leicester certainly did not demean herself in a manner likely to soothe the feelings of her injured cousin.

[1] On hearing of Leicester's marriage, Lady Sheffield married Sir Edward Stafford, of Grafton, brother of Lady Drury (Elizabeth Stafford). [2] Camden.

Instead, her marriage being openly acknowledged, she did all in her power to demonstrate that Lettice, Countess of Leicester, was every whit as great a personage as Elizabeth, Queen of England. She came to Whitehall in dresses whose magnificence exceeded those of the Queen's Majesty. Elizabeth expressed displeasure, but my Lady of Leicester paid no heed. Elizabeth, goaded beyond endurance, soundly boxed the Countess of Leicester's ears, at the same time declaring that as but one sun lighted the earth, so there should be but one at the Court, which henceforward would be closed to the Countess of Leicester.

Lettice departed unrepentant, and the next news the Queen had of her was to the effect that she drove about London in a magnificent coach drawn by four milk-white horses. Footmen in black velvet escorted the equipage, and behind came other coaches filled with ladies and pages, so that the inhabitants of Cheapside cranned their necks out of their gabled houses, supposing some great princess to be passing by.

Further, when the Earl of Leicester went abroad to the Netherlands in 1586:

"It was told her majesty, that my lady was prepared presently to come over to your excellency, with such a train of ladies, gentlewomen, and such rich coaches, litters, and side-saddles, as her Majesty had none such, and that there should be such a court of ladies as should far pass her majesty's Court here. This information, though most false, did not a little stir her majesty, to extreme choler and dislike of all your doings there, saying, with great oaths, she would have no more courts under

her obeisance but her own, and would revoke you from thence with all speed."[1]

Monsieur Simier took the opportunity of Leicester's disgrace to press for a favourable reply to Alençon's suit. Elizabeth, though now more inclined to listen, still refused to commit herself definitely without seeing the prince in person.

Party feeling at Court ran high; the Earl of Oxford supported the French match; Philip Sidney and his friends vigorously opposed it on the score of unsuitability in age and religion. The younger courtiers gave whole-hearted support to the latter party, for they had grown accustomed to the romantic attitude of avowed worshippers of a Virgin princess, and they very much resented the idea of a foreign prince intruding on their domain.

Despite the two factions, on the surface at any rate the gay life at Court appeared undisturbed. In honour of the French envoys there were even more festivities than usual, and all the big town houses were filled with ladies anxious to obtain invitations to the Court functions.

The Countess of Leicester, still forbidden the Court, might not take her rightful place as one of the London hostesses, but her two girls, Penelope and Dorothy Devereux, were not barred by their mother's disgrace, and could always be sure of a warm welcome from the Queen. Penelope had fulfilled the promise of her childhood, and grown into a lovely girl, the admiration of Mr. Philip Sidney, who regarded her as his destined bride. Calling

[1] Leicester's Correspondence.

her "Stella" and himself Astrophel, he wrote sonnets in her praise, which were circulated in manuscript about the Court, causing Penelope to be envied by all the other girls.

> "To her he vow'd the service of his days;[1]
> On her he spent the riches of his wit;
> For her he made hymns of immortal praise;
> Of only her he sung, he thought, he writ.
> Her and but her, of love he worthy deemed;
> For all the rest but little he estemed."

At a tournament, when Sidney carried off the prize, he attributed his success to the fact that "Stella" had been among the onlookers in the gallery:

> "Having this day my horse, my hand, my lance,
> Guided so well that I obtained the prize,
> Both by the judgment of the English eyes
> And of some sent from that sweet enemy France,
> Horsemen, my skill in horsemanship advance,
> Townsfolk my strength; a daintier judge applies
> His praise to sleight, which from good use doth rise;
> Some lucky wits impute it but to chance;
> Others, because of both sides I do take
> My blood from them who did excel in this,
> Think nature me a man of arms did make.
> How far they shoot awry! the true cause is,
> Stella looked on, and from her heavenly face
> Sent forth the beams which made so fair my race."[2]

Sidney's dislike of the French match eventually broke out into an open quarrel on the tennis-court with the Earl of Oxford, who favoured the proposed marriage. The galleries were filled with spectators watching a game between Philip and his friends, when the Earl of Oxford

[1] Spenser, *Astrophel*, II, 61–66.
[2] *Astrophel and Stella*, Sonnet XLI.

entered, and demanded the use of the Court. Sidney refused. The Earl of Oxford called him a puppy; Philip indignantly denied canine parentage; "in which progress of heat, as the tempest grew more and more vehement within, so did their hearts breath out their perturbations in a more loud and shrill accent."[1]

Elizabeth, hearing of the quarrel, endeavoured to make Philip, as the lesser in rank, apologize. This he refused to do; further, he got deeper into disgrace by writing a letter to the Queen plainly setting forth arguments against the French match.

Philip, wearied at the constraints of Court life, and longing to utilize his brains and manhood in useful work, took the opportunity of the Queen's disfavour to obtain leave to pay a visit to his sister, Mary, at Wilton. Once more the two studied together as in the days of their happy childhood, and jointly translated *The Psalms of David*.

At Mary's wish Philip commenced *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*. "You desired me to do it, and your desire to my heart is an absolute commandment," he wrote in the dedication, offering the book to her, his "most dear, and most worthy to be most dear Lady." Of its writing, "your own dear self can best witness the manner, being done in loose sheets of paper, most of it in your presence, the rest by sheets sent unto you as fast as they were done."

During Sidney's absence from Court, Penelope Devereux's guardian, the Earl of Huntingdon, arranged a marriage for her with a wealthy suitor, Lord Rich, son of the late Lord Chancellor. Penelope's wishes were con-

[1]Fulke Greville's *Life of Sir Philip Sidney*.

sidered of no moment, and the Queen having given her consent the marriage was hastily concluded, despite the pathetic protests of the bride, who had the heartiest dislike of the man destined to be her husband.

Philip at Wilton heard the news with dismay, expressing his bitterness in a sonnet punning on the bridegroom's name.

"Rich fools there be, whose base and filthy heart
Lies hatching still the goods wherein they flow,
And, damning their own selves to Tantal's smart,
(Wealth breeding want), more blest, more wretched grow;
Yet to those fools Heaven doth such wit impart,
As what their hands do hold, their heads do know;
And knowing, love, and loving, lay apart
As sacred things, far from all danger's show.
But that Rich fool who, by blind Fortune's lot,
The richest gem of love and life enjoys,
And can with foul abuse such beauties blot;
Let him—deprived of sweet but unfelt joys,
Exiled for aye from those high treasures which
He knows not—grow in only folly Rich."

Philip Sidney returned to Court with a halo of blighted affection, which made him more interesting than ever in the eyes of the Maids of Honour. But though "full many maidens often did him woo," Philip gave them no encouragement. As Lady Rich came constantly to Court Philip's love for her intensified, and he continued to write sonnets commemorative of his love and despair. No other woman could awake in him the rapture of love as "Stella" had done, but during Philip's visits to his friend, Sir Francis Walsingham, there gradually grew up a "joyful love and great liking" betwixt him and his host's young daughter Frances, which ultimately ended in marriage.

CHAPTER XIV

AS Elizabeth flatly refused to become engaged to a prince she had not seen, there seemed every reason to anticipate that negotiations for the French match would continue for a pleasantly indefinite period, wholly to the liking of Elizabeth and Monsieur Simier. Not so to Alençon, Duke of Anjou, since the death of his elder brother, who at length lost patience, and determined to hazard all on a secret visit to England. With only two attendants he appeared suddenly at Greenwich and requested an audience of the Queen.

The Palace hummed with excitement; after years of fruitless diplomatic negotiations a real live suitor had actually come in person to woo the Maiden Queen of England. The ladies were all agog to see if Monsieur would prove as ugly as common report credited, or the captivating Adonis depicted by the French envoys. When eventually they caught a glimpse of the grotesque little French prince, they unanimously gave the palm for veracity to general opinion, and prepared to hear their mistress wax sarcastic over the physical defects of her proposed consort.

Contrary to all expectation Elizabeth did nothing of the sort. Instead she very nearly, if not quite, fell in love with the "pock marked boy." Ugly undoubtedly he was; young enough to be her son; but withal original, witty, and full of the most pleasing conceits of flattery.

Alençon's secret visit, though of brief duration, proved so eminently satisfactory that he returned to France

fully confident of becoming the English Queen's affianced husband. There followed much coming and going between the two countries, and great preparations for Monsieur's public arrival. Elizabeth ordered a grand banqueting house to be erected at Whitehall, and made purchase of six grey Hungarian horses to pull her coach; to render their appearance more impressive she had their manes and tails dyed orange colour. Also, since the Countess of Leicester's ladies drove in coaches, Elizabeth, not to be outdone, bade her coach builder hie him to work with all speed on fourteen coaches for the ladies of her privy chamber.

Whether Elizabeth really meant to marry the Duke of Anjou no one could tell, "everyone fishing to catch the Queen's humour in it."[1] Sir Francis Walsingham, who went over to France to arrange for either the match or a league against Spain, received such contradictory reports that he wrote to Burleigh in despair:

"When her Majesty is pressed to the marriage, then she seemeth to affect a league; and when the league is yielded to, then she liketh better a marriage; and when thereupon she is moved to assent to a marriage, she hathe recourse to the league; and when the motion for the league, or any request is made for money, then Her Majesty returneth to the marriage."[2]

The country generally disliked the proposed match, and John Stubbes, a gentleman of Lincoln's Inn, voiced the general discontent in a book called *The Discovery of a gaping gulf, wherein England is like to be swallowed by*

[1] Fulke Greville's *Life of Sir Philip Sidney*.
[2] Digges's *Complete Ambassador*.

another French match. In it he set forth all the ills consequent on the nuptials between "the crowned nymph of England," and "an imp of the house of France."

Elizabeth ordered the book to be suppressed, and sentenced both writer and publisher to have their right hands struck off in the market place at Westminster. "God save the Queen," said John Stubbes, raising his hat with his left hand as the right fell off.

In November, Alençon arrived on a second visit, Elizabeth evincing the greatest possible delight at his return. At forty-eight she still retained a measure of her good looks, and left nothing undone to minimize the apparent disparity of years between herself and her boy lover. If silver threads glistened among her once auburn locks, only tirewomen were wiser, for a periwig[1] covered all deficiencies. Moreover, it added the charm of variety, for being fashionable and so wore without disguise she could select wigs of size or shape to match her different gowns. Then, too, if nature's roses no longer bloomed in her cheeks, there was no need to despair when there were means whereby she might at will assume the bold blush, or demurer tints of modest maidenhood. Court ladies followed where the Queen led, citizen's wives were no whit behind, so that makers of wigs and cosmetics flourished exceedingly.

Moralists declaimed bitterly against both customs, fore-

[1] "Her hair is auburn, mine a perfect yellow:
If that be all the difference in his love
I'll get me such a colour'd periwig."
The Two Gentlemen of Verona, IV, 4.

telling awesomely that, "whosoever doe colour their faces or their haire with any unnaturall colour they begin to prognosticate of what colour they shall be in hell."[1] Dramatists, too, were not backward in hinting that ladies, with "their cheeks sugar-candied and cherry blusht so sweetly,"[2] dare not come out in the rain "for fear their colour should be wash'd away."[3]

Threats and sarcasms were alike thrown away on the ladies, all bent on making themselves "prodigiously nice" in the eyes of the French visitors. Long and elaborate were their preparations on those days when Alençon waited in the presence chamber to lead forth the Queen.

In Elizabeth's bedroom she and her ladies held anxious consultation beneath the star-spangled gilt ceiling. A large silver-topped table held array of toilet requisites, whilst the silken-hung four-post bedstead, and inlaid coffer chests, were alike covered with articles of dress.

Seated on a pile of gold-covered cushions Elizabeth passed her wardrobe in review, as one by one Mary Scudamore and her helpers brought forward dresses for inspection. Many and of infinite variety were they: of richest silks, velvets and satins, diversely embroidered in designs of figures, animals, fruit, flowers, insects, cobwebs and landscapes.

Mary Scudamore, who had hundreds of gowns under her charge, kept careful inventory of them all:

"a forepart of white satten, embrodered all over with pansies, little roses, knotts, and a border of mulberries,

[1] *The Anatomie of Abuses*, Philip Stubbes.
[2] Nash's *Pierce Penilesse*. [3] *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV, 3.

pillars, and pomegranets, of Venice golde, sylver, and sylke of sondrye colours.

One forepart of greene satten, embrodered all over with sylver, like beasts, fowles, and fishes.

A pettitcoat, embrodered all over slightly with snakes of Venice gold and silver and some O's, with a faire border embrodered like seas, cloudes, and rainebowes.

One forepart of white satten, embrodered all over with spiders, flies, and roundells, with cobwebs, of Venice golde and tawny silk."

The Queen's ladies had helped to swell the contents of her wardrobe with many contrivances of their nimble fingers. Lady Mary Vere had worked a "forepart of purple taphata, set with roses of white syphers and cheynes between of Venice golde"; Frances Howard, and a newcomer, Elizabeth Throckmorton,[1] both gave beautiful embroidered ruffs, whilst Her Majesty's large stock of fancy handkerchiefs were almost entirely of the girls' making.

When the apparel for the day had been decided upon and the tirewomen had finished their handiwork, they left to make way for Lady Howard, who had succeeded Blanche Parry as keeper of the jewels. "Kate Carey," Elizabeth's closest friend and confidante, now had a grown-up family, and Elizabeth Howard, her eldest girl and the Queen's god-daughter, had recently come to Court as Maid of Honour. Years had changed "Kate Carey" into a staid matron, but they made scant alteration in her royal cousin, who bridled and prattled over her latest love affair as she had done in the days when she and Kate Carey were girls together.

[1] d. of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton.

Coll. of Major the Hon. Harold Pearson *Photo Messrs. Sotheby's*

KATE CAREY, COUNTESS OF NOTTINGHAM

...NTRAL

Trinkets of all kinds, result of many New Year's gifts, sparkled on the trays which lay between the two women. Lady Howard's own contributions were by no means inconsiderable, including several jewelled animals; a gold and ruby dolphin, a gold greyhound with diamond-studded collar and "a jewell of golde being a catt and myce playing with her garnished with small diyamonds and perles." Blanche Parry's presents were even more numerous, amongst them being an elaborate pendant representing "Adam and Eve enamuled in white." Ann Russell (Countess of Warwick), and Ann Cecil (Countess of Oxford), were each responsible for handsome bracelets; Katherine Knevett (Lady Paget-Carey), a pair of emerald ear-rings; May Sidney (Countess of Pembroke), a gold and diamond-encrusted mermaid; a hair ornament of a heart set in a wreath of pearls came from Penelope Devereux (Lady Rich).

The Maids of Honour, though they possessed less comprehensive wardrobes and jewel chests, were no wise behind their mistress in their anxiety to create a good impression on the French visitors. Elizabeth constantly exhorted them, "that decent attire is good thoughe it be not costly," but the ladies were vehemently of the opinion that "unlesse it be deere it is not comely."[1]

As usual, when in waiting they wore shimmering dresses of white and silver; dainty ruffs framed their bright hair gleaming with glittering jewels; sparkling pendants swung beneath their clear-cut chins; chased and scented pomanders and fans hung from their girdles.

[1] *Letters of Euphues*, John Lyly.

Never had the Court been so gay, for though the ladies were quite unable to discern Monsieur's fascinations they found the gentlemen of his entourage entirely to their liking. They envied Frances Howard the ease with which she could talk French, but still they were all quite capable of making themselves understood, any deficiencies in language being adequately filled by glances from bright eyes, or coquettish flirting with fans.

English courtiers looked on deeply affronted; like the Queen's disconsolate favourites, they viewed the visitors with extreme disfavour. Never had the fickle beauties of the privy chamber seemed more attractive; Mary Radcliffe so comely, Elizabeth Trentham[1] so fair, Margaret Edgecumbe[2] so modest, or Elizabeth Throckmorton and Elizabeth Howard so entirely desirable, now that their smiles were so lavishly bestowed on the perfidious Frenchmen.

Day after day there were amusements, and feasting in the new banqueting hall. The Queen and Monsieur at one table, and below them a long one down the room for the ladies and their companions the French gentlemen. English courtiers stood, or sat where they could, glowering on the scene, whilst up above in the leafy ceiling birds warbled sweetly.

It is true that most of the entertainments had to take place within the precincts of Whitehall, it not being deemed advisable to display the person of Monsieur to the unedified eyes of London citizens. The palace, however,

[1] d. of Thomas Trentham, of Rowchester, Stafford.
[2] d. Pierce Edgecumbe of Mount Edgcumb, M.P. for Cornwall.

had its own resources; the guests hunted in St. James's and Hyde Parks; amused themselves with cock-fighting, bowls, tennis, or exercising in the tilt yard. Raze Bowes, master of the Queen's game at Paris Garden,[1] brought the most famous bears over from Southwark to be baited by dogs in Whitehall.

The annual tournament in honour of the Queen's accession was held, as usual, at Whitehall on November 17th. Elizabeth in the gallery paid scant attention to her champion, Sir Henry Lee, and other valiant knights, so engrossed was she by Alençon, who wooed her with persuasive tongue and ardent eyes. Elizabeth, fairly carried off her feet, forgot she was a Queen, forgot her years, her austere virginity; everything, indeed, save the magic of love. Taking a ring from her finger, she gave it to Alençon, so openly that he, and all who saw the act, regarded it as a definite pledge of betrothal.

Ambassadors hastened back to despatch special couriers with the news; Londoners heard the report with dolour; pedlars leaving town that night advertized it through the provinces along with their wares.

At the palace excitement ran high. The ladies were besieged with petitions to use all their influence to prevent the engagement, if possible, but in any case to ascertain exactly how far matters had gone.

The ladies who had no wish for their mistress to marry,

[1] The noise at these entertainments became proverbial, any rowdy assemblage being termed a "perfect bear garden." From the same source came the synonym for bad temper, "a bear with a sore head."

promised whole-hearted support, and before the Queen returned to the privy chamber they evolved a plan of campaign. When Elizabeth, already repenting of her rashness, rejoined them she found them all in tears and very Job's comforters:

"The Queene's women with whom she was familiar, wailed, and by laying terrors before her, did so vex her mind with anguish, that she spent the night in doubteful care without sleepe, amongst her women which did nothing but weepe."[1]

Ladies of the bedchamber foretold diminution of her power and loss of the nation's affection; Blanche Parry recalled the unhappiness of her sister Mary with Philip of Spain; Mary Radcliffe requoted Elizabeth's own arguments on the superiority of virginity; Maids of Honour with gusto repeated reasons the Queen had used to thwart their own love affairs. In united chorus they wrung their hands and besought her not to throw herself away upon a beardless boy.

Morning found the ladies exhausted but triumphant, and Elizabeth resolved to remain a spinster. Having dried their eyes and repaired the damage to their complexions, Maids of Honour assured the anxious courtiers without that all would be well, as Her Majesty had sent a message to Sir Christopher Hatton, requesting him to come at once in order to help her out of a very difficult situation.

Alençon paid an early visit with all the confidence of an assured lover, but his eager protestations of affection were

[1] Camden's *Annales*.

chilled by the Queen's evident agitation, and the presence of an undoubtedly hostile third party.

Elizabeth in eulogistic terms professed the deepest affection for Monsieur, and though she had decided never to marry she begged that he would think of her as a sister.

Monsieur, angry and mortified, flatly refused to do anything of the sort: he declared that Englishwomen were as fickle as their climate, and burst into tears.

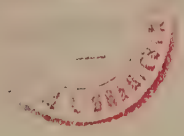
Elizabeth could not bear to see her "little frog" cry, and drying his eyes with her own handkerchief, endeavoured to console him with words "even more tender than the occasion demanded."

Altogether it proved a sad ending to a pleasantly protracted flirtation, and when Monsieur left Elizabeth and the ladies accompanied the departing visitors to Canterbury, where "the departure was mournful between her majesty and Monsieur, she loth to let him go and he as loth to depart."

Equally regretful were the French gentlemen to say good-bye to the ladies, "to all of whom it was like grief to depart after they had conversed and lived friendlie and brotherlie together for the space of three months."[1]

To do Monsieur all honour a number of prominent courtiers attended him as far as Antwerp, among them being the Earl of Leicester, Charles Howard, Philip Sidney, Fulke Greville, Edward Dyer, William Knollys, Walter Raleigh and Peregrine Bertie.

[1] Talbot Papers.



CHAPTER XV

PEREGRINE BERTIE, one of the escort who right gladly accompanied Elizabeth's rejected suitor out of England, was the only son of the Duchess of Suffolk by her second husband, Mr. Richard Bertie. Peregrine gained his name by the accident of his birth, which took place at Wesel during his parents' wanderings on the Continent in the reign of Queen Mary. On the accession of Elizabeth, and restoration of the Protestant religion, the family returned to England.

Peregrine went early to Court, where he fell in with a rollicking set of young courtiers whose riotous doings caused their parents no little anxiety. The Duchess of Suffolk wrote in alarm to Lord Burleigh, "intreating him for God's sake to give the young man, her son, good counsel to bridle his youth," and to send him down into the country to his father before he got into worse mischief.

Having sown his wild oats, Peregrine settled down into a sober, honest soldier, who held that "a court became a souldier of good skill and great spirit, as a bed of down would one of the Tower lions."[1]

He had, however, fallen deeply in love with one of the Court ladies, Lady Mary Vere, and her he very earnestly desired to make his wife. She was willing, but her brother, the Earl of Oxford, not only withheld his consent, but did everything possible to thwart the match.

[1] Fuller's *Worthies*. The lions kept in the Tower menagerie were famous and considered one of the sights of London.

Fearing Lady Mary would think him neglectful in not coming to see her, Peregrine wrote to explain how matters stood.

"My owne good lady, I am not a little grieved that I have not on this time resolved the doubts I left you in, and so much the more as I feare it hath caused your unquietness, in whom I make more account of than myselfe or life, and therefore resolve yourself that if I had fit time I would not slightly overpass it. But the truth is, by other trobles, I have yet hard nothinge of that matter worthie the sendinge, yet did I think not to lose so much occasyon since I know not whan to recover it agayne, as to let understand how uncurteously I am delte with by my Lord your brother, who, as I heare, bandeth against me and sweareth my death, which I feare not nor force not, but lest his displeasure shold withdraw your affection towards me, otherwise I think no way to be so offended as I can not deffend. And thus good lady parsuade yourselfe no lesse than you shall find I will give cause to perfourme. Above all things if you wishe me well let nothing greve you whatsoever you shall heare do happe. For my own parte my good or ill fortune consisteth only in you, whom I must request to accepet as well this scribbled well meaning as eloquence, which are locked upp so fast as I could skarce get pen and paper to be the present messengers of my pore good will, and thus end a wyfull man, having received new occasyon by your letter of this instant to troble you more hereafter withal. From Willoughbie house. Yours more than his owne and so till his end."[1]

Peregrine Bertie's family were quite as much opposed to the match as the Earl of Oxford, and Lady Mary Vere paid a visit to the Duchess of Suffolk in the hope of coming

[1] Earl of Ancaster's MSS., Hist. MSS. Com.

to some understanding. The Duchess said frankly she would rather her son "had matched in any other place,"[1] and if Lady Mary proved like her brother she would not have her for a daughter-in-law if an empire followed her.

Lady Mary pleaded that she could neither rule her brother's tongue nor help his faults; but for herself she would prove such a dutiful daughter that her mother-in-law "should have no cause to mislike her." If the Duchess and Mr. Bertie would but give their goodwill to the marriage, she and Peregrine asked for nothing else.

The Duchess replied that they would require something more tangible than that on whch to start housekeeping. She feared her husband would be so much against the match that he would give little more than his goodwill, even if he gave that.

Also the Queen's consent to Peregrine's marrying anybody had to be obtained, for as the Duchess pointed out, "if her majesty mislike of it, sure we turn him to the wild world."

Lady Mary replied that they had already thought of this, and had begged Lord Sussex and Sir Christopher Hatton to speak in their favour. If only the Duchess would write to ask Lord Burleigh's assistance, then surely with three such powerful champions the Queen would not withhold the desired permission.

The Duchess promptly pointed out that the Earl of Oxford had treated Ann Cecil so badly that she could hardly ask a favour for his sister. Lady Mary persisted that Lord Burleigh could not be so unjust as to visit her

[1] Salisbury MSS.

brother's offences on her. Moreover, she flatteringly insinuated that the Duchess had such influence with the lord treasurer that she could make him do anything she wanted.

The Duchess refused to make any definite promise, and did her best to keep her son from Court. At this the Queen took umbrage, thinking it a slight against herself. The Duchess of Suffolk then did as Lady Mary wanted, and wrote to ask Lord Burleigh to do what he could for the young people. The Queen, on being approached, would not at first say ay or nay, but after keeping the lovers in suspense for some time she eventually gave her consent.

Mary exchanged a gay Court life for a quiet one full of domestic interests, when she started housekeeping at the family mansion in the Barbican. Peregrine, who on the death of his mother became Lord Willoughby de Eresby, liked an orderly life, for the furtherance whereby he drew up a code of rules to be observed by all in his service. At the end of the list he added a general exhortation:

"I do wish and heartily desire that all my servants should be of godly virtuous and honest conversation, refraining from vicious living, unseemly talk, excessive drinking, seditious language, mocking, scoffing, or misnaming, and that by abstaining from variance, dissensions, debates, frays, sowing of discord, malice, envy and hatred, they shall live and continue in all friendly affection together, as it becometh the body of one family, to love the one the other; and towards all strangers to be of honest and conrteous entertainment. By which doings, God will

the sooner bless my proceedings, prosper your doings, and myself will not fail in what I possibly may to do you good."[1]

The Queen had too high opinion of Lord Willoughby to allow him to remain long at home, and in 1582 he went as ambassador to Denmark, leaving Mary behind "to playe the good huswyfe." Luckily the young wife had a counsellor in John Stubbes who had lost his hand for opposing the French marriage. When trouble arose over some suits of armour which Lord Willoughby's cousin demanded, but Mary refused to let go without more direct authority, John Stubbes upheld her decision to Lord Willoughby:

" Good my Lord, my lady your wife takes upon herself for guardian of your house and what is therein during your absence . . . it would remedy all to delyver your pleasure in a few written words. To say the truth, it is no tryfelyng matter to empty your store of armour. It is a man's other threshory, therefore requireth some warrant from yourself. A man shall hardly get a robbinet out of her majesty's armoury without a warrant."[2]

Mary's nursery filled quickly, for though she had the sorrow to lose her first little girl, four boys—Peregrine, Henry, Vere and Roger—followed in quick succession.

During her periods of enforced idleness Mary lay in state in her "great chamber," the large room upstairs dedicated to the important events of family life. Heirs were born in the great chamber, where again in the fullness of years they lay statuesque in death. Young mothers in a white hung bed received congratulations;

[1] Earl of Ancaster's MSS. [2] *Ibid.*

widows environed by black curtains accepted condolences. Babies were frequently christened in the State bedroom; often the same surroundings saw them united in the bonds of holy matrimony.

Lady Willoughby's household treasures were under her immediate eye as she waited in readiness for her visitors, whose coaches could be heard rumbling over the cobbles of the Barbican. Mary's immense four-post bedstead had curtains of white satin enriched with a design carried out in gleaming silk and mother of pearl; the bedspread, exquisite in colour and needlework, had been worked by her own hands. Rose petals covered the floor; the richest set of tapestry the house afforded hung on the walls; handsome cabinets displayed chased silver ware and tinted china; small tables inlaid with tortoiseshell and silver stood about bearing jars of potpourri.

Lady Willoughby's eyes brightened when her friends entered the room, for time hung heavy on her hands so that she longed for some one to come and play cards, or enliven her solitude with the latest Court gossip.

Of the latter the ladies usually had plentiful supply. They told of disagreements between the Earl and Countess of Leicester; the unhappy married life of Lord and Lady Rich; the latest stories of the Queen's favourites; or discussed with bated breath the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots.

In the privy chamber they spoke of many changes: Frances Howard and the Earl of Hertford, after nine years of waiting, had at length married with the "joyful will and good liking of the Queen." They were living in

Canon Row, but as Elizabeth had stipulated that Frances should not leave her entirely, she would probably be in residence when the Court moved to Greenwich. Her Majesty had been present at the marriage of Elizabeth Howard to Sir Robert Southwell,[1] and had signified her affection for Margaret Edgecumbe, by presenting her with a pair of richly embroidered gloves, when she left Court to become the bride of Edward Denny.[2]

There arose some difficulty over a name for Mary's second daughter, born during Lord Willoughby's absence as Ambassador to Denmark. Mary thought it would please him if she called the baby Frederick after the Danish King. The new baby proving a girl upset this plan, but Mary decided to call her Sophia after the Frederick's Queen, and to ask the Danish ambassador to stand "gossip."

John Stubbes, as usual called for consultation, approved and promised to wait on the ambassador. A cautious friend, however, advised him not to do so before Lady Willoughby had obtained the Queen's sanction. Elizabeth might be pleased; on the other hand she might not, when there would be trouble for all concerned. So, indeed, it proved, for Elizabeth when approached on the matter "liked that he should be banqueted but not gossipped."

Other godparents were found, but the question of the baby's name remained undecided. The Countess of Huntingdon, chief gossip, handed the child to the clergyman, giving the name Sophia as she knew the

[1] Son of Thomas Southwell, *vide* p. 90.

[2] Sir E. Denny, Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, son of Sir Anthony Denny, Gentleman of the Privy Chamber to Henry VIII.

Coll. of Major the Hon. Harold Pearson *Photo Messrs. Sotheby's*

ELIZABETH HOWARD, LADY SOUTHWELL

mother wished. The other two gossips, either through ignorance or design, gave the name Katherine after the Countess of Huntingdon.[1] The result was that at the end of the ceremony, neither mother, nor "gossips," nor John Stubbes was the least sure what name the baby had received. In some embarrassment John Stubbes wrote to Lord Willoughby: "So have you a Katherine name after my lady's grace your mother, and yet to please the Danish Queen, you may rightly say that at the font by the most honourable gossip, it was named Sophia."

Lord Willoughby served under the Earl of Leicester in the Low Countries, where he gained distinction by unhorsing the Spanish leader. "I yield myself to you for that you be a seemly knight," cried the Spaniard as man and horse rolled over under the shock of their opponent's lance. News of this doughty deed fired the ballad singers, who in market places and fairs stentoriously declaimed the valorous doings of "Brave Lord Willoughby."

At Court, though the deed did not lack appreciation among those who had witnessed "Peregrine Bertie's" prowess in the tournaments, it was too deeply overshadowed by a calamity which formed the chief topic of conversation. Sir Philip Sidney, too, had gone over to Flanders, and one foggy morning had ridden forth to the Battle of Zutphen. Valiantly he rode at the head of his men; bravely he fought; sore was he wounded. Lying on the ground with a shattered thigh, he asked faintly for water. As he lifted the bottle to his lips Philip saw a dying

[1] Katherine, d. of John Dudley, Duke Northumberland, m. Henry, 3rd Earl Huntingdon.

soldier with parched lips looking longingly towards it. Instantly he handed it to the man, saying gently, "Thy necessity is yet greater than mine."

Grievous was the wound, but the surgeons did not despair; "with love and care well mixed, they began the cure, and continued it some sixteen days, not with hope, but rather such confidence of his recovery, as the joy of their hearts over-flowed their discretion, and made them spread the intelligence of it to the Queen, and all his noble friends here in England when it was received, not as private, but public good news."[1]

Despite the doctors' optimism, and his wife's careful nursing, Philip Sidney grew worse, and after lingering for three weeks he died on Monday, 17th October, 1586.

The Queen, who had constantly written to Philip during his illness, was overwhelmed with sorrow; so were all the ladies, his many men friends, the army abroad, and the nation at home. "It was accounted a sin, for any gentleman of quality, for many months after, to appear at Court or City, in any light or gaudy apparel."[2]

Heaviest of all the blow fell on sister Mary, the Countess of Pembroke, who expressed the agony of her grief in

"THE DOLEFUL LAY OF CLORINDA

"Ah me! to whom shall I my case complain,
That may compassion my impatient grief?
Or where shall I unfold my inward pain,
That my enriven heart may find relief?
Shall I unto the heavenly powers it show?
Or unto earthly men that dwell below.

[1] Fulke Greville's *Life of Sir Philip Sidney.*
[2] *The Life and Death of Sir Philip Sidney.*

To heavens? ah, they, alas, the authors were
And workers of my unremedied woe:
For they foresaw, what to us happens here,
And they foresaw, yet suffered this be so.
From them comes good; from them comes also ill;
That which they made, who can them warn to spill?

To men? ah, they, alas, like wretched be,
And subject to the heaven's ordinance;
Bound to obey whatever they decree,
Their best redress is their best sufferance.
How then can they, like wretched, comfort me,
The which no less need comforted to be?

Then to myself will I my sorrow mourn,
Since more alive like sorrowful remains;
And to myself my plaints shall back return,
To pay their usury with doubled pains.
The woods, the hills, the rivers shall resound
The mournful accent of my sorrow's ground."

Seven hundred mourners followed Sir Philip Sidney to his resting-place in St. Paul's Cathedral. In London's most famous church rested his body; his soul with God; his memory enshrined in the heritage of unborn generations, as Camden prophetically pretold:

"Rest then in peace, O Sidney, we will not celebrate your memory with tears, but admiration. Whatever we loved in you, whatever we admired in you, still continues and will continue in the memories of men, the revolutions of ages, and the annals of time. Many, as inglorious and ignoble, are buried in oblivion; but Sidney shall live to all posterity."[1]

[1] Camden's *Britannia*.

CHAPTER XVI

AMONG the young men who came to Court to seek their fortunes was Mr. Walter Raleigh, son of a Devonshire squire. Though of no great family he obtained introduction to the Palace through the influence of two kinsfolk, Mrs. Ashley, the Queen's old governess, and Arthur Georges[1] one of the gentleman pensioners.

Raleigh, with veins afire for adventure, lacked the wherewithal to prosecute the schemes teeming in his eager brain, but he had plenty of assurance, and in appearance confidently held his own, "having a good presence in a handsome well compacted person; a strong natural wit, and better judgement; with a bold and plausible tongue, whereby he could set out his parts to the best advantage."[2]

Raleigh's first care was to doff his country habiliments and deck himself out in the extremity of fashion, that he might jet up and down with the rest of the young gallants, who disdained no device to set off their attractions. One of them, Sir John Harrington,[3] the Queen's "saucy godson," naively explained some of the current devices: "We goe brave in apparell that wee may be taken for better men than wee bee; we use much

[1] Third son of Sir William Georges, Vice-Admiral of the Fleet. His mother was cousin of Walter Raleigh.

[2] Naunton's *Fragmenta Regalia.*

[3] Son of Sir John Harrington and Isabella Markham, Maid of Honour to Elizabeth before her accession.

bumbastings and quiltings to seem fitter formed, better shouldered, smaller wasted, fulled thyght than wee are; wee barbe and shave often to seeme younger than wee are; wee use perfumes both inward and outward to seeme sweeter than wee bee; we use courtuous salutations to seem kinder than we be; and somtymes graver and godly communications, to seem wyser than wee bee."[1]

The outfit of an aspiring courtier needed a long purse: velvet doublets, plumed hats, silk hose, and fashionable footwear all ran away with money. Piccadilly ruffs, now grown so elaborate that they cost several pounds apiece, were alone enough to ruin a poor man.

Cloaks too, the finishing touch to the exquisite, were ruinously expensive when made of "divers and sundrye colours, white, red, tawnie, black, greene, yellow, russet, purple, velvet, taffetie and such like, whereof some be of the Spanishe, French, and Dutch Fashions."[2] They were slashed, embroidered, richly lined, ornamented with tassels, glass bugles, or even prescious stones, as described by Christopher Marlowe in his account of a typical gallant:

> "He wears a lord's revenue on his back
> And Midas like he gets it in the Court,
> With base outlandish cullions at his heels
> Whose proud fantastic liveries make such show,
> As if that Proteus, god of shapes, appear'd.
> I have not seen a dapper jack so brisk
> He wears a short Italian hooded cloak,
> Larded with pearl, and in his Tuscan cap,
> A jewel of more value than a crown."[3]

[1] Harrington's *Nugæ Antiquæ*.
[2] Stubbes's *Anatomy of Abuses*. [3] *Edward II*, I, 4.

Young men who travelled on the Continent brought back foreign words, and clothes in general use in the countries they had visited. These were immediately copied in slavish emulation by the would-be fashionable youths of the time. Courtiers who had never set foot out of England interlarded their conversation with foreign phrases, and intrigued with their tailors for new-fashioned garments. Often the results proved incongruous, to the amusement of the ladies, who openly mocked at their admirers' appearance:

"How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour everywhere."[1]

Walter Raleigh, Thomas Perrot,[2] Thomas Shirley,[3] Arthur Gorges, Thomas Cavendish[4] and Robert Carey[5] cut brave figures in their fashionable attire; but between vanity, jealousy and having nothing particular to do, they not infrequently got into trouble.

Walter Raleigh and Thomas Perrot fell out, and had to appear before the privy council "for a fraye made betwixt them." As result they found unwelcome accommodation at the Fleet for six days, when they were again admonished

[1] *Merchant of Venice*, I, 2.

[2] Son of Sir John Perrot, reputed natural son of Henry VIII.

[3] Son of Sir Thos. Shirley, of Wiston, Sussex. Fitted out several privateering expeditions. M.P. for Bramber and Hastings, 1601. Captured by Turks, 1602. James I petitioned for his release.

[4] Thomas Cavendish, of Grimston Hall, Suffolk.

[5] Youngest son of 1st Lord Hunsdon, brother of Lady Howard and Lady Scrope. Carried news of Elizabeth's death to James I.

for their good behaviour. Eventually they obtained release on an undertaking to keep Her Majesty's peace, "the one toward the other, and in the mean season to demean themselves quietly."[1]

Thomas Perrot soon got into worse disfavour for presuming to fall in love with Lady Dorothy Devereux, and marrying her without the Queen's permission. The wedding took place at Broxbourn in Hertfordshire, whither Lady Dorothy had gone on a visit to some friends. Fearing the vicar would not perform the ceremony, they obtained the services of a more obliging cleric, who went up to the vicarage to ask for the key of the church. Two men with daggers under their cloaks guarded the church door, and when the vicar, becoming suspicious, arrived on the scene, he received rough handling. He asked to see the licence, which the bridegroom produced readily enough, but would not allow it to be read. Perrot then offered the vicar a ryall to marry him and Lady Dorothy, but he refused, and tried to snatch the book from the strange clergyman who, without surplice, in his cloak, with riding boots and spurs, gabbled the service through.

As might have been foreseen, Elizabeth punished Thomas Perrot for his presumption in daring to take unto himself a wife without her sanction; Dorothy Devereux for having wedded an inferior in rank, and Bishop Aylmer for granting the marriage licence.

Walter Raleigh's sins of commission were not enough to bring him to the Queen's notice, though he suffered a second short imprisonment for being concerned in a

[1] Acts of the Privy Council.

quarrel at the tennis court. Very earnestly indeed did he desire to attract Elizabeth's attention favourably unto himself, and at length fortune granted him opportunity. Elizabeth started out for a walk in Greenwich Park accompanied by her ladies and a number of courtiers, among them Mr. Walter Raleigh tricked out to admiration. Presently the party came to a miry place, where the boggy ground squelched under the ladies' high-heeled shoes. Elizabeth hesitated, loath to wet her feet, courtiers scattered to right and left searching a drier crossing, when up stepped Mr. Walter Raleigh, unloosed his handsome cloak, laid it on the muddy ground and deferentially besought Her Majesty to honour him by stepping on it. Elizabeth, smiling gracious appreciation of this act of gallantry, passed over dry shod, whereon triumphant Mr. Raleigh picked up his muddy cloak to the envious chagrin of all his fellows.

The act of chivalry soon had its reward, for Elizabeth had noted both the young man's good looks and resourceful mind. She prided herself on having "a nice taste in men" for their appearance, coupled with acute perception of their inward worth as useful servants of the State. Closer acquaintance with Mr. Raleigh confirmed her good opinion and he took up the running for Court favourite.

At first Raleigh in amazement affected diffidence:

"Fain would I climb but that I fear to fall"

he scratched on a window-pane in the Queen's presence. Elizabeth in turn, taking the diamond, completed the couplet: "If thy heart fail thee climb not at all."[1]

[1] Fuller's *Worthies*.

Thus heartened, Raleigh hesitated no longer, but climbed with such right goodwill, that the two long-established favourites, the Earl of Leicester and Sir Christopher Hatton, were furious. Leicester brought his youthful stepson, the Earl of Essex, to Court in the hope of supplanting their new rival, but for a time it seemed as if Raleigh, and he alone, could please the Queen's fancy.

Sir Walter had achieved far more than he ever dared to hope, but he also found that the position of Queen's favourite had its drawbacks. Elizabeth was an exacting mistress, who wished to have the object of her affection always within sight, whereas Raleigh longed to join in the adventurous lives of privateers and explorers. He had great ideas for the colonization of Virginia, the newly discovered land named after the Virgin Queen, but when the time for parting came Elizabeth would not let her favourite go, and Thomas Cavendish went in his stead.

Cavendish, whose sister had recently been appointed to a place in the privy chamber, had squandered his patrimony in youthful excesses at Court so that he took to privateering as a means of restoring his fortune. To filch a prize from Spain was accorded meritorious by all, so that when Cavendish captured the *Santa Anna*, a famous treasure ship, his country acclaimed him. On his return he sailed up the Thames in splendour, the sails of his ship being cloth of gold, and his seamen clad in rich silk.

Many were the curiosities which the explorers brought home as presents for the ladies. The Queen naturally had first choice, and to her fell the unicorn's horn[1] valued

[1] Probably the horn of a narwhal.

at £100,000, which became one of the treasures of Windsor. A sea-unicorn's horn, presented by Martin Frobisher, was handed over to Mrs. Scudamore to hang among Her Majesty's dresses as a preventative of poison.

Hawkins affirmed the existence of land unicorns in the forests of Florida, and from their presence deducted abundance of lions because of the traditional antipathy between the two animals, so that where "the one is the other cannot be missing." Spenser described a fight between a lion and a unicorn.

> "Like as a lyon, whose imperiall powre
> A prowd rebellious unicorne defies,
> T'Avoide the rash assault and wrathful stowre
> Of his fiers foe, him to a tree applies,
> And when him running in full course he spies,
> He slips aside; the whiles that furious beast
> His precious horne, sought of his enemies,
> Stikes in the stocke, ne thence can be releast,
> But to the mighty victour yields a bounteous feast."

Not always could unicorns "be betray'd with trees,"[1] and though jewellers were credited with great daring in their endeavours to get the precious horn, they were sometimes betrayed by the unicorn, as one traveller claimed to have witnessed:

> "as I once did see,
> In my young travels through Armenia
> An angry unicorn in his full career
> Charge with too swift a foot a jeweller
> That watcht him for the treasure of his brow;
> And, ere he could get shelter of a tree,
> Nail him with his rich antler to the earth."[2]

[1] *Julius Cæsar*, II, 1.
[2] *Bussy d'Amboise*, Geo. Chapman.

Fiercest, proudest, least tamable of beasts, travellers declared that the sight of a pure virgin reduced the most savage unicorn to instant docility. On her lap would he lay his head with its priceless horn, when hunters could approach and secure him without danger to themselves.

By strategy, too, might pursuing tigers be circumvented, for assuredly would they halt to behold their own reflections if mirrors were left behind. Looking-glasses, indeed, were invaluable when dealing with strange beasts. The man who met a baleful basilisk[1] and had no mirror was lost, for its glance meant death. If he had a mirror, and retained sufficient presence of mind to use it, he held it up so that the basilisk, beholding its own reflection, instantly expired.

Stout-hearted mariners knew an equally effective method of defeating the designs of mournful crocodiles, who cried and sobbed "like any christian body," till sympathetic listeners drew near to ascertain the cause of such distress. The crocodile, watchful of opportunity, seized the inexperienced traveller and devoured him, weeping. An old hand, knowing the crocodile to be a "fearful serpent," abhorring all manner of noise, especially "the strained voice of a man,"[2] shouted for all he was worth, at the same time winking incessantly with his left eye whilst "looking steadfastly upon him with his right eye." This

[1] Basilisk or Cockatrice, hatched by a serpent from a cock's egg.

"come, basilisk,
And kill the innocent gazer with thy sight."

2 *King Henry VI*, III, 2.

[2] *The History of Serpents*, Ed. Topsel, 1607.

combined treatment could be relied on to put the most lachrymose crocodile to flight.

"Crocodiles' tears, Crocodiles' tears," jeered the Courtiers when Maids of Honour made pretended penitence, for "as the crocodile when he crieth goeth then about most to deceive, so doth a woman most commonly when she weepeth."[1]

Stung to retaliative similitude, the ladies retorted that rude young men needed licking into shape, as female bears licked their formless cubs into semblance of their parents.[2]

Equally proverbial were the miraculous doings of the pelican who revived its young with its own life blood; or the phœnix, "the bird of wonder," which lived for hundreds of years, and after self-immolation rose rejuvenated from its own ashes.

Horrible were the accounts of

> "The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
> Do grow beneath their shoulders."[3]

Equally intimidating were the Monocelli, who had but one foot apiece, but of such bigness that it afforded them adequate shelter from the sun, when they lay on their backs with their "one onely foote" over their heads. Worst of all was the mantechore, "which runneth swiftly

[1] *Navigations of Hakluyt*, 2nd voyage, John Hawkins.

[2] Bears were thought to bring forth their young as shapeless lumps of flesh which the mothers licked into shape with their tongues.

> "Like to a chaos, or unlick'd bear-whelp
> That carries no impression like the dam."

3 *King Henry VI*, III, 2.

[3] *Othello*, I, 3.

and eateth men." Travellers fearsomely particularized this monster as having the head of a man with three rows of teeth in each jaw, the body of a bear, legs of a lion, tail of a scorpion, and voice of a trumpet.

Even on board their own ships the intrepid explorers were by no means safe from the lures

"Of mermaids that the southern seas do haunt."[1]

Singing songs, they followed the ships, being "glad and merry in a tempest but sad and heavy in fair weather." With eyes averted and ears plugged, fearful mariners drove their good ship straight ahead to escape the fair sirens who lured them to destruction. Mirrors in this case were of no avail, but a frantic hurling overboard of empty bottles sometimes proved effective, causing the mermaids to play with such novelties and enable the ship to get away.

Equally dreaded was the sea serpent, whose terrible appearance and unattractive habits were familiar to all:

"He hath commonly hair hanging from his neck a cubit long, and sharp scales and is black, and he hath flameling shining eyes. This snake disquiets the shippers, and he puts up his head like a pillar, and catcheth away men."[2]

Very earnestly did the good people at home desire to behold some of these wonders with their own eyes. Show-

[1] Hall's *Satires*.

"I'll drown more sailors than the mermaid shall;
I'll slay more gazers than the basilisk."

3 *King Henry VI*, III, 2.

[2] Olaus Magnus (Hist. Goths and Swedes).

men who had booths in Fleet Street would give much money for curiosities, real or faked. The sailor who could bring home a monster was a made man:

"A strange fish! Were I in England now, as once I was, and had but this fish painted, not a holiday fool there but would give a piece of silver: there would this monster make a man; any strange beast there makes a man. When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian."[1]

[1] *The Tempest*, II, 2.

CHAPTER XVII

THOUGH the exploits of the explorers did much to enhance the prestige of English seamanship, they undoubtedly led to strained relations with Spain, who regarded their boldest exploits as sheer acts of piracy. Bernardino de Mendoza, the Spanish Ambassador, acting on instructions from King Philip, went down to see Elizabeth at Richmond, with a plain request that she would restore the plunder Drake had taken from Spanish treasure ships. The Queen in pained surprise said it was the first she had heard of the matter; nor would depart from ignorance, though Mendoza assured her that he had himself been telling her of it for the past three and a half years. With cynical skill the Spaniard worked Elizabeth into a white heat of fury, by hinting that if she remained obdurately deaf it might be necessary to see if the roar of Spanish cannon could improve her defective hearing. Having conveyed the hint and set Elizabeth hectoring, he waived the matter as not worth disputing with "a lady so beautiful that even lions would crouch before her."[1] "She is so vain and flighty that her anger was soothed at hearing this," wrote the ambassador in his account of the interview, when he referred to Elizabeth not as lion taming lady, but a "rusty old weather cock" veering with every breeze.

The breach between the two nations widened, and dis-

[1] *Calendar Spanish State Papers*, 1580–6.

quieting news reached England of the mighty Armada which Philip of Spain was preparing with a view to invading his sister-in-law's country. Sir Francis Drake, with Elizabeth's sanction, sailed southward, burnt the ships in Cadiz Harbour, captured one of the largest treasure ships, and returned home triumphantly boasting that he had singed the King of Spain's whiskers.

King Philip, enraged but not intimidated, went on with his preparations, and it soon became evident that the terrible Armada was no vague threat, but a very immediate menace. England made active preparation for defence, and the city of London was called on to state its resources. The Lord Mayor, as spokesman, replied with a counter-question of how much was expected. "Five thousand men and fifteen ships," came the reply, which the city answered by volunteering to provide ten thousand men and thirty ships.

The provinces were no whit behind the capital in offers of assistance at so critical a time. Sir Edward Fitton of Gawsworth wrote in haste to Lord Burleigh:

"My very good Lord, being extreme sicke in my bed, and hearing the styre and the news about the southe partes, I have entreated this bearer, my cousen Bould,who acknowledgeth himselfe most bounde to your lordship, to lett your Lordship know, that at your lordship's pleasure I will send to your Lordship two hundred able men, and if I be able to lyve, will bring them. I presume to write this because other Lords send all their servants; and, my Lord, if your Lordship lust to wryte, a number of my kyn and friends have sayd, they will be at your command. Thus, being sicke in my bed, and so having been this three

weeks, I humbly take my leave. Gawsworth this 8th of August 1588. Your lordship's during my lyfe.

ED. PHYTON.[1]

Our furniture generally is bowes, jacks, and bylles."

Lord Howard of Effingham, the Lord Admiral, had command of the fleet, taking with him his son-in-law, Sir Robert Southwell, and having the assistance of such experienced seamen as Drake, Hawkins and Frobisher. The "English gentry of the younger sort" offered themselves as volunteers, and "taking leave of their parents, wives, and children, did with incredible cheerfulness, hire ships at their own charge, and, in pure love to their country, joined the grand fleet in vast numbers."[2] In the hour of peril England trusted her navy:

> " Let us be back'd with God and with the seas
> Which he hath given for fence impregnable,
> And with their helps only defend ourselves :
> In them and in ourselves our safety lies."[3]

At the palace all was excitement: the Queen prepared a prayer to be used in the churches; courtiers exchanged their gay habits for clanking armour; ladies stitched favours and banners. There were many leave-takings in the privy gardens, for the sudden shock of national danger caused many young people to realize the depth of their own feelings towards each other.

Day after day came the noise of men marching, as levies

[1] Edward Fitton, of Gawsworth, Cheshire, Lord President of Munster, m. Alice, d. of Sir John Holcroft (sister of Isabel Holcroft). Sir Edward's daughter, Mary, came to Court as Maid of Honour a few years later. [2] Camden.

[3] 3rd Part *King Henry VI*, *Act* IV, *Scene* 1.

from the country passed through London on their way to join the Army at Tilbury. To provide for the feeding of so many extra people, and prevent a sudden rise in prices, the Privy Council wrote a letter to the Lord Mayor,

"requiring him to take order with the bakers, brewers, and all other victuallers in and about the cittie that they make forthwith an extraordinary provision of all sorts of victualles against the repair thereto of certain nombers of horsemen and footmen appointed to garde her majestie's person, so as by his lordship's care there be no scarcetie or lacke, and to avoid exaction or enhansment of prices more then is cause, to appoint certain aldermen to have charge of the ordering and containinge of prices of victualles within a competent and reasonable rate."[1]

Elizabeth, though fifty-five years of age, was aflame with military ardour, and desirous of riding at the head of her Army to repel the invaders. This the Privy Council would not hear of, and enlisted the services of Leicester, the Commander-in-Chief, who in an adroit letter of negation, spiced with flattery, managed to combat the embarrassing suggestion.

If Elizabeth might not lead her Army into battle as former Kings had done, she would at least inspect it in person, and taking her eager ladies went down by barge to the camp at Tilbury. Ballad-singers lusciously described the event for the benefit of rustic audiences:

"Then came the Queen, on prancing steed, attired like an angel bright;
And eight brave footmen at her feet whose jerkins were most rich in sight.

[1] Acts of the Privy Council, July 28th, 1588.

Her ladies, likewise of great honour, most sumptuously did wait upon her,
With pearls and diamonds brave adorned, and costly combs of gold:
Her Guards, in scarlet, then rode after, with bowes and arrows, stout and bold."[1]

The Maids of Honour were eager-eyed for the sights of the camp, and even more so to catch a glimpse of the important young officers who had been their companions at masques and dances such a short time since. They had hoped to be present when the Queen reviewed the troops, but in this they were disappointed, as Elizabeth decided to go alone. The ladies decked out their mistress in one of her most magnificent dresses, over which, to show a martial spirit, she donned a corselet of polished steel. As the white-plumed helmet proved both uncomfortable and unbecoming, she rode forth bareheaded, and it was carried behind by a page.

Maids of Honour watched from upstairs windows, as the Queen, mounted on an imposing charger, cantered off with the Earl of Leicester in the direction of the camp, where a roar of applause announced her arrival. Later on in the afternoon the royal party left Tilbury and returned to St. James's Palace, where days of tense excitement were passed.

To keep the country informed of the trend of events during such a critical time, Elizabeth and her ministers issued a newspaper called *The English Mercurie*[2] which

[1] *Ballad on the Armada*, by T. Delony (printed in *Arber's English Gorner*).

[2] A copy of this, the earliest newspaper, is in the British Museum

informed a trembling nation "that the Spanish Armada was seen on the 20th ult. in the chops of the Channel, making for its entrance with a favourable gale."

Watchers on the coast kept keen-eyed vigilance, till at length off the Lizard

"the English descried the Spanish ships, with lofty turrets, like castles, in front like a half-moon, the wings thereof spreading out about the length of seven miles, sailing very slowly, though with full sails, the winds being, as it were, tired with carrying them, and the ocean groaning with the weight of them."[1]

That night a chain of bonfires flared from hill-top to hill-top, and from Land's End to John o' Groats folk slept uneasy in their beds, nor knew what the morrow might bring forth. So long had the Armada been talked of, so greatly feared, that the Maids of Honour had scared faces as they undressed that night in their dormitory. A wild night it proved, too, and those who had lovers in the brave little fleet which had gone out to challenge the mighty Armada tossed sleepless as the storm rose in fury.

Mire-bespattered messengers clattered up to London with despatches for the Queen, and the news they brought seemed incredible in its good tidings. The great Spanish Armada of a hundred and fifty ships, broken, defeated, ignominously chased by the English fleet of eighty small ships. True it proved. Later reports only brought confirmation; church bells, throughout the land chimed the joyful tidings that England was saved.

[1] Camden.

The Queen went in state to St. Paul's to give public thanksgiving, and in honour of a naval victory the streets were decorated with blue cloth. The city companies lined one side of the road, and gentlemen of the Inns of Court the opposite. Elizabeth rode in a triumphal coach, fronted by a lion and dragon supporting the Arms of England, and four pillars upheld a canopy in the shape of an imperial crown. Following came the ladies, and after them a long procession of gentlemen.

Cheering, cheering all the way. Graciously the Queen acknowledged the acclamations; gracefully the Maids of Honour bent their heads, first to those on one side of the road, then to those on the other. "Mark the Courtiers," said Francis Bacon standing with the lawyers; "those who bow first to the citizens are in debt; those who bow first to us are at law."

Elizabeth held her warriors in high esteem, but the Earl of Leicester transcended them all, so that she would have made him lord lieutenant of England and Ireland, had not Lord Burleigh's strong representations hindered such an unprecedented step. Leicester, greatly annoyed at the interference, left the Court in anger, intending to retire to his castle at Kenilworth. The next news that came to hand was that he died suddenly at Cornbury in Oxfordshire.

Leicester dead! The tidings flew hot-winged, yet few would credit the report. He so virile, so powerful; it seemed incredible. He died of a fever contracted in camp, the physicians said, but so tame an ending for so great a man could not pass current, and rumour with a

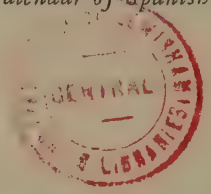
busy tongue supplied several highly garnished versions of his death.

The differences between the Earl of Leicester and his wife were common property, so that the country generally favoured the story that Leicester had prepared a poisoned draught for Lettice, "which he willed her to use in any faintness." She, not suspecting its properties, gave him a drink of the supposed cordial when he came to Cornbury, and of the results whereof he died.

At Court the great question was how the news would affect the Queen, and in truth she took it very hardly. Lover of her youth, and friend of many years, Leicester occupied a place in Elizabeth's affections that no other could wholly replace. In her at least he had one true mourner if the Spanish Ambassador reported true:

"The Queen is sorry for his death, but no other person in the country. She was so grieved that for some days she shut herself in her chamber alone, and refused to speak to anyone until the Treasurer and other councillors had the door broken open and entered to see her."[1]

[1] *Calendar of Spanish State Papers.*



CHAPTER XVIII

SIR WALTER RALEIGH and the Earl of Essex contested with zest, embittered by enmity, for the vacant position of chief favourite. They were hereditary antagonists so to speak, for Leicester had brought his young stepson to Court with the avowed hope of counteracting the Queen's infatuation for Raleigh. At first the boy made little headway against the older man, but gradually his "goodly person" and "innate courtesy" made their impression. Elizabeth began to take obvious delight in his company: "When she is abroade, no boddy neare her but my Lord of Essex; and at night my Lord is at cards, or one game or another with her, that he cometh not to his owne lodginge tyll birds sing in the morninge."[1]

Raleigh's star waned in consequence, so that a year after the Armada Essex's friends triumphantly reported that he had chased Sir Walter away from the Court. Raleigh took the opportunity to go over to his house at Youghal in Ireland, where he interested himself in cultivating the sweet potato which the explorers had brought from America. He likewise astonished Irishmen by an even more surprising innovation—tobacco. Raleigh had been one of the first converts to the new fashion, having long-stemmed pipes with silver bowls especially made for presentation among his friends at Court.

In Ireland Raleigh met Edmund Spenser, the first

[1] Bagot Memorials.

three books of whose poem, *The Faerie Queene*, he read with appreciative pleasure. Greatly he heartened the poet by foretelling the delight which the work must give to Elizabeth and all her Court, so that when Sir Walter returned to England Spenser accompanied him bearing his precious manuscript. Elizabeth, glad to have Sir Walter back, readily agreed to receive his friend, who in verse declared the Faerie Queene's magnificence exceeded his imagination.

> "Untill that we to Cynthiæ's presence came:
> Whose glorie greater than my simple thought,
> I found much greater then the former fame.
> Such greatnes I cannot compare to ought;
> But if I like ought on earth might read,
> I would her lyken to a crowne of lillies
> Upon a virgin bryde's adorned head,
> With Roses dight, and Goolds, and Daffadillies;
> Or like the circlet of a Turtle true,
> In which all colours of the rainbow bee;
> Or like fair Phebe's garland shining new,
> In which all pure perfection one may see.
> But vaine it is to think, by paragon
> Of earthly things, to judge of things divine;
> Her power, her mercy, her wisedome, none
> Can deeme, but who, the Godhead can define."

Great "Gloriana" was undoubtedly pleased at the compliments paid to her in *The Faerie Queene*, but she did not give the poet the material rewards which he confidently anticipated would be his mead. Sir Walter had represented his mistress as one "whose grace was great, and bounty most rewardful." Spenser admitted the former, but found the latter strangely lacking.

Eventually he received a pension of £50, but not the official appointment he had so earnestly hoped might enable him to live in England. Bitterly disillusioned, he returned to Ireland, and in *Mother Hubberd's Tale* summed up the humiliating disappointments incidental to those seeking patronage at Court:

> "Full little knowest thou that hast not tried
> What hell it is in suing long to bide;
> To lose good dayes, that might be better spent;
> To waste long nights in pensive discontent;
> To spend to day, to be put back to morrow;
> To feed on hope, to pine with feare and sorrow;
> To have thy Princes' grace, yet want her Peeres;
> To have thy asking, yet waite manie yeeres;
> To fret thy soule with crosses and with cares;
> To eat thy heart through comfortless dispaires;
> To spend, to give, to wait, to be undonne.
> Unhappie wight, bore to desastrous end,
> That doth his life in so long tendance spend."

Raleigh suffered none of these slights, for he belonged to the charmed inner circle immediately surrounding the Queen. In the sumptuous private apartments of the Palace, Sir Walter and the Earl of Essex jealously paid homage at the shrine of "great Gloriana," a sprightly, bewigged, bejewelled, well-got-up woman, with the intellect of a man and the vanity of a girl. As the two men knelt beside the pile of gaily hued cushions on which their liege lady reclined, they could not refrain from casting stealthy glances at the pretty white clad Maids of Honour singing to their lutes or virginals. One of their favourite songs was Christopher Marlowe's "The Passionate

Shepherd to his Love," to which Sir Walter Raleigh had composed the sophisticated lady's reply to the country delights offered her:

"If all the world and love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee and be thy love.

But time drives flocks from field to fold
When rivers rage and rocks grow cold;
And Philomel becometh dumb;
The rest complains of cares to come.

The flowers fade, and wanton fields
To wayward winter reckoning yields.
A honey tongue a heart of gall
Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies,
Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten,
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw and ivy buds
Thy coral clasps and amber studs,—
All those in me no means can move
To come to thee and be thy love.

But could youth last, and love still lived;
Had joys no date, nor age no need
Then those delights my mind might move
To live with thee and be thy love."

Sir Walter's heart thrilled when he heard Elizabeth Throckmorton's voice lilt in the cadence of his song, for as he made silver-tongued flattery to the Queen, his

thoughts were more and more with the young Maid of Honour.

Elizabeth Throckmorton would veil her soft eyes, when Sir Walter's bold one sought to plumb their depths for the secret she fain would hide. In Court, out of Court, during progresses, pageants, dances or plays, Sir Walter's place was near the Queen when he fain would have been by Elizabeth Throckmorton.

The two, having come to a mutual understanding of their feelings towards each other, contrived to meet whenever circumstances would permit. Sir Walter Raleigh, Captain of the Guard and avowedly high in Her Majesty's favour, might not show open preference for a lady of the privy chamber, but there were many places in the Palace grounds where a man and a maid might contrive stolen meetings. The gardener, in his potting-shed at the end of the open gallery at Richmond, could an he would, have told how often two very well-known people at the Court were in each other's company. Together Walter Raleigh and Elizabeth Throckmorton paced the thickly foliaged pleached alleys in the orchard, or halted by the dove-cot where soft-breasted birds crooned amorous cuckoo-oo-oo.

The privy garden, with its formal knots and borders so dear to the gardener's heart, was too public a place for the Queen's favourite and Maid of Honour to frequent; rather they preferred the winding by-paths bordered with sun-blown marigolds, leading down to the river. Sitting on the grassy bank, on summer days when the sunlight danced in the water, and little ships with ruddy sails plied up and down the river, the lovers talked of the future. Halcyon hours, passing all too quickly,

yet remaining treasured among the jewels of memory, to be recalled in darker years, when Sir Walter wrote to his wife, as one "that chose you and loved you in his happiest time."

The lovers knew full well that they lived in peril of discovery; should an enemy carry tidings of their meetings to the Queen, then in very deed would a storm arise to overwhelm them. The anticipated thunder-clap came suddenly, on the eve of Raleigh's departure on a voyage.

Long had the lure of undiscovered lands called him; deeply did he long to feel the salt spray of the sea on his face as a good ship ploughed its way across the ocean. Over and over again had he sought permission to join in some enterprise, but Elizabeth's fondness stood in the way. Philip Sidney's death had forged tighter chains for succeeding favourites, for where the Queen loved she sought to screen from danger. Raleigh combated her affection by avarice, representing the richness of the treasure which after a few short months' absence he would assuredly bring back to lay at her feet. At length he obtained reluctant permission, and in all jubilation hastened down to Chatham to make preparations for departure.

Court seemed dull without Sir Walter, insupportably so Elizabeth found it, and she despatched a messenger bidding him return to her side. Before he could obey the summons, the Queen's love had changed suddenly to hate, consequent on the discovery that Elizabeth Throckmorton had more serious reason to bewail Raleigh's absence than herself.

Coll. of Lord Sackville

ELIZABETH THROCKMORTON, LADY RALEIGH

CENTRAL

Sir Walter heard of his peril at Chatham, and in a panic of fear wrote to Sir Robert Cecil:

"I mean not to come away, as they say I will, for fear of a marriage, and I know not what. If any such thing there were, I would have imparted it to yourself, before any man living, and therefore, I pray, believe it not, and I beseech you to suppress, what you can, any such malicious report. For I protest before God there is none on the face of the earth, that I would be fastened to."[1]

Denial proved useless in face of supportable facts, and the angry Queen sent both parties off to the Tower. Elizabeth Throckmorton, with the ordeal of child-birth hanging over her, accepted imprisonment with resignation. She even found extenuation for Sir Walter's denial, on the plea that "if faith were broken with me, I was yet far away."

Very differently behaved Sir Walter, whose active nature could ill brook the restraints of prison life. Having accurate knowledge of the Queen's temperament, coupled with assurance that all he said or did would reach her ears, he made theatrical display of frenzied love. As the Queen's barge passed slowly by the Tower, Sir Walter wrestled with his keeper, vowing his intention of jumping into the river in order to swim out to his adored mistress.

Indicative of his extreme despair on hearing Elizabeth intended to leave town for a progress into the country, he wrote to Sir Robert Cecil:

"My heart was never broken till this day, that I hear the Queen goes away so far off—whom I have followed in

[1] Printed in Letters of Sir W. Raleigh, E. Edwards.

so many journeys, and am now left behind in a dark prison all alone. While she was nire at hand, that I might hear of her once in two or three dayes, my sorrows were the less; but even now my heart is cast into the depths of all misery. I that was wont to behold her riding like Alexander, hunting like Diana, walking like Venus, the gentle wind blowing her fair hair about her pure cheeks, like a nymph: sometimes singing like an angell: sometimes playing like Orpheus. Behold the sorrows of this world! Once amiss hath bereaved me of all."[1]

Even this imaginative catalogue of his mistress's charms did not open the prison doors for Sir Walter, who in his daily exercise regarded the inmates of the Tower menagerie with fellow feelings. After watching the old lion "Edward VI" pace stiffly up and down his cage, and a slack-muscled tiger yawning for sheer ennui, Sir Walter wrote despondingly to Lord Howard of Effingham that if freedom were denied him it would save trouble to use his body to feed the lions.

Raleigh's friends did all they could to secure mitigation of his punishment. Edmund Spenser in a new canto of *The Faerie Queene* described the loves of Timias (Sir Walter Raleigh), for Amoret (Elizabeth Throckmorton), with the consequent discovery by Belphœbe (the Queen):

> "Thence she them brought towards the place where late
> She left the gentle squire with Amoret:
> There she him found by that new lovely mate,
> Who lay the whiles in swoune, full sadly set,
> From her faire eyes wiping the deawy wet,

[1] Murdin's *State Papers*.

Which softly stild, and kissing them atweene,
And handling soft the hurts, which she did get.
For of that Carle she sorely bruz'd had beene,
Als of his own rash hand one wound was to be seene.

Which when she saw, with sodaine glauncing eye,
Her noble heart with sight thereof was fild
With deepe disdaine, and great indignity,
That in her wrath she thought them both have thrild,
With that selfe arrow, which the Carle had kild:
Yet held her wrathfull hand from vengeance sore,
But drawing nigh, ere he her well beheld;
Is this the faith, she said, and said no more
But turned her face, and fled away for evermore."[1]

In the end the Queen relented insomuch that she permitted Sir Walter, his wife and little son, to leave the Tower for their country house at Sherborne. Amid peaceful rural surroundings the prisoners took up the threads of life anew, sharing common interests, and growing to know one another with a deepening love. Sir Walter looked forward to the time when he would be allowed to return to Court, but Elizabeth, fully occupied with her home and garden, had no regret for the gay life of her girlhood. Sir Walter, who still corresponded with Sir Robert Cecil told of her contentment: "my wife sayes that you came hither in an unseasonable tyme, and had no leisure to looke abrode; and that every day this place amends, and London, to her, grows worss and worss."[2]

[1] *The Faerie Queene*, Book III, Canto VII.
[2] Printed in Letters of Raleigh, ed. E. Edwards.

OF LEWISHAM
CENTRAL
PUBLIC LIBRARIES

CHAPTER XIX

FRANCES HOWARD, "for her many graces both of mind and body"[1] continued high in the Queen's regard after her marriage with the Earl of Hertford. Therefore, when making a progress through Sussex and Hampshire in 1591, Elizabeth announced her intention of visiting "good Franke" at Elvetham.

Notification of the intended honour occasioned the Earl and Countess of Hertford no little perturbation. Elizabeth was not a visitor who would take things as they were; she would undoubtedly expect amusement, excitement, rich presents and every costly luxury. Moreover, with her would come several hundreds of persons who must be housed and fed. Elvetham, one of the Earl's smaller residences, had nothing like the required accommodation; yet housed in some manner they must be, so builders, carpenters and artificers were sent for in all haste to erect extra buildings in the park.

Frances grappled with the problem of catering, aided by experiences of past progresses, and spurred by the knowledge that at Cowdray, where the Court was now entertained by Lord Montacute, three whole oxen, supplemented by one hundred and forty geese, had been the provision for one morning's breakfast. Servants in the Hertford livery scoured the country for eatables, whilst

[1] On her monument in St. Benedict's Chapel, Westminster Abbey. The Earl of Hertford m., 3rdly, Frances Howard, d. of Viscount Bindon.

cunning cooks from London set laboriously to work to fill the larders with elaborate confectionery:

"Her majestie's arms in sugar-work.
The severall armes of all our nobilitie in sugar-work.
Many men and women in sugar-work.
Castles, forts, ordinance, drummers, trumpeters, and soldiers of all sorts, in sugar-worke.
Lions, unicorns, beares, horses, camels, bulls, rams, dogges, tygers, elephants, antelops, dromedaries, apes and all other beasts, in sugar-worke. Eagles, falcons, cranes, bustardes, heronshawes, bitterns, pheasants, partridges, quails, larks, sparrows, pigeons, cocks, owles, and all that fly in sugar-worke.
Snakes, adders, vipers, frogs, toads, and all kinds of worms in sugar-work.
Mermaids, whales, dolphins, congers, sturgeons, pikes, carps, breams, and all sorts of fishes in sugar-worke."

Besides these standing dishes, there were marchpane delicacies of sugared almond in "flat work"; "grapes, muscles, cockles, periwinkles, crabs, lobsters, apples, pears and plums of all sorts, preserves, suckats, jellies, leaches, marmelats, pasts, comfits, of all sorts."

With the memory of the far-back festivities at Kenilworth, Frances inclined to the idea of a water pageant by way of entertainment. The great objection to this idea lay in the fact that Elvetham had no lake. Still, having surmounted so many difficulties in connection with the Queen's visit, the Earl of Hertford would not let such a trifle stand in the way. If his Countess considered a water pageant necessary, then one should there be, lake or no lake. Frances did think so, whereon handy men set

instantly to work to make a goodly pond the perfect figure of a half-moon.

Shortly their labour materialized: muddy water environed by sticky banks; still a goodly pond and semi-circular. The handy men displayed it with pride to the Countess of Hertford. Frances viewed it without enthusiasm; during its excavation the idea of a water pageant had taken definite shape; a goodly pond alone no longer sufficed her. She desired the handy men to furnish the pond with islands. Not mere mud dumps, but islands semblatively imaginative of a ship, a fort, and a snail. The handy men scratched their heads and set to work. Presently there arose an island with tree poles for masts in emulation of a sailing ship; one like a fort bearing cannon; and a third with circulated gradations of privet bushes for a snail.

Within doors the Countess of Hertford and her women stitched away at sails for the "ship isle," and dresses to be worn by the performers in the pageant. Rehearsals for the latter were in full swing, the actors trusting that both their parts and the properties would be perfected by the time of Her Majesty's visit.

On Monday, September 20th, the Earl of Hertford with two hundred friends and retainers, wearing gold chains round their hats and black and orange feathers in their hats, rode forth to meet the Queen. Half-way across the park Elizabeth was met by six virgins, who preceded her to the house strewing flowers before her horse and singing:

> "With fragrant flowers we strew the way,
> And make this our chief holiday;
> For though this clime were blest of yore,
> Yet was it never proud before.

Oh, beauteous Queen of second Troy
Accept of our unfeigned joy!

Now air is sweeter than sweet balm,
And satyrs dance about the palm;
Now earth with verdure newly dight
Gives perfect sign of her delight.
Oh, beauteous Queen of second Troy,
Accept of our unfeigned joy!

Now birds record new harmony.
And trees do whistle melody,
Now everything that nature breeds
Doth clad itself in pleasant weeds.
Oh, beauteous Queen of second Troy,
Accept of our unfeigned joy!"[1]

The Countess of Hertford "most humbly on her knees welcomed her Highness," who bade her rise up and kissed her, "using manie comfortable and princely speeches."

Questions of etiquette, usually perturbing to country hostesses, did not trouble Frances, who had spent fifteen years at Court, and in consequence knew all Queen Elizabeth's peculiarities to a nicety. There had been many changes in the privy chamber since she left, but her sister, Catherine Howard, and Mary Radcliffe still remained heart-whole as of yore. Together the three talked over old times; its love affairs, scandals and amusements. Shrewd-tongued Blanche Parry,[2] who had told all their fortunes, was dead, also Ann Cecil, whose married life had proved

[1] Nichols's *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth.*

[2] She was buried in St. Margaret's, Westminster, where there is a monument to her memory. Another monument at Bacton, Herefordshire, shows her kneeling before Queen Elizabeth.

such a failure. The Earl of Oxford, once so beloved by them all, had taken for his second wife Elizabeth Trentham, co-Maid of Honour with his daughter Elizabeth Vere.

Recent happenings included the unpardonable offence of Lady Hertford's nephew, Lord Robert Dudley,[1] who full and fair in the Queen's very presence had actually kissed Mrs. Cavendish! In extenuation he represented that they were secretly married, and she his lawful wife. As excuse this proved valueless, and he had been forbidden the Court.

Of like temerity was Sir Thomas Shirley, the discovery of whose engagement to Frances Vavasour[2] had seriously ruffled the Queen's visit during the recent visit at Cowdray. Not only the other Maids of Honour, but even Sir Robert Cecil and Frances Vavasour's aunt, Lady Paget Carey, had found themselves involved in the storm. "Katherine Knevett" had written a letter to the young man's father, praying him "to place against his offence his now most grievous case." Luckily Lady Paget Carey had expressed herself guardedly, for the Queen got wind of the letter and commanded Sir Thomas Shirley, the elder, to forward it immediately for her inspection. At the same time she instructed Sir Robert Cecil to express her anger at this contempt of her Court.

Sir Thomas Shirley, in response to a hint from Sir Robert Cecil to send a letter he could show the Queen, professed himself almost overcome "in regard of the most

[1] Lord Robert Dudley, son of the Earl of Leicester and Lady Sheffield.

[2] d. of Henry Vavasour of Coppenthorp, a younger branch of the Vavasours of Hazlewood, Yorks.

unhappy wreched dealynge of my unworthy boye by which I stand vexed both in hart and sowle." After "fourteen unhappy weeks' imprisonment," the subdued and penitent "boye" sued to Lord Burghley:

"I do most humbly beseech your good Lordship to have compassion on my most miserable estate. I have acknowledged myne offence to her majesty in ye grief of my heart, with a troubled soul, and fourteen unhappy weeks' imprisonment; but amongst all these calamities, none is so greavous unto me as that I live in disgrace with her Highness, whose favour and gratious opinion I esteem above my life, and would be glad to redeem it with the loss of half ye goods that God hath appointed me to have, and will be most willing to spend the rest of my life in her Highnesses service. I prostrate myself most humbly at her majestie's feet, and will not think any chastiment too much that shall be imposed; yet, nevertheless, if her majesty shall please, of Her gratious goodness, to esteem myne already streytened punishment sufficient, and to pardon myne offence, and grand me my liberty, I will think and acknowledge that her majesty doth deal most gratiously with me, and that I do receive a second life from her; and if by your Lordship's good means I may be released from this great misery both of body and mind, I shall be bound to your Lordship while I live, and will not fail, both by my service and prayers, to seek all means to deserve ye same; and so I do most humbly commit myself to your honourable consideration, at the sorrowful marshalsea, the 28th of December 1591.

Your good Lordship's most dutifully bound
to doe you all servis. Thomas Sherley."[1]

[1] Lansdowne MS.

Though Frances Vavasour might take no part in the Elvetham festivities, her sister, Ann Vavasour, Bridget Manners, Elizabeth Vere, Lady Mary Howard, and the other Maids of Honour, contrived to enjoy themselves amazingly. In particular, the water pageant proved a great success, though at first fears were entertained lest inclement weather should prevent its presentation.

Elizabeth, seated on a chair of State, beneath a canopy of green and silver, its silver poles upheld by four stalwart knights, watched the proceedings with interest. First came the sea gods, swimming or wading according to several ability, headed by Nereus "attired in redde silke, and having a cornered cappe on his wilde heade." In his wake five Tritons, "all with grislie heads, and beardes of divers colours and fashions, all five cheerfully sounding their trumpets." To their music was added the earnest endeavour of three virgins in a beflagged pinnace, playing Scottish jigs on cornets.

Sea gods made laudatory speeches, supplemented by rich presents provided by the Earl and Countess of Hertford; followed by aquatic horse-play, till their rivals, the wild men of the woods, dashed up to contest their supremacy. Sylvanus, the leader, clad in hairy skins, with his face, arms and legs dyed saffron, began his speech:

> "Sylvanus comes from out the leafy groaves
> To honor her whom all the world adores,"

when Nereus pulled him back into the pond, to the exceeding mirth of the spectators. Then a mimic battle between the rivals followed which brought the pageant to

an end, Elizabeth expressing herself as greatly diverted thereby.

Another novelty provided for the Queen's pleasure was a tennis match, not played in covered court according to custom, but out of doors on one of the smooth lawns near the house.

"Ten of the Earle of Hertford's servants, all Somersetshire men, in a square greene court, before her majestie's window, did hang up lines, squaring out the forme of a tennis-court, and making a crosse line in the middle. In this square they (being stript out of their dublets) played five to five with hand-ball at bord and cord (as they term it), to the so great liking of her Highnes, that she graciously deyned to beholde their pastime more than an hour and a half."[1]

In the evening, when moth-hunting bats flitted over the garden, the royal party sat down to an open-air banquet. The long tressel tables, set in an open gallery overlooking the garden, groaned beneath the array of provisions, set off by sparkling silver plate and crystal glasses. Torch-bearers lighted the guests, and a hundred links formed a line from the gallery to the cook-house on the hill, from whence two hundred of my Lord of Hertford's men ran backwards and forward with fresh dishes. For diversion, there were fireworks sent up from the islands in the pond, which broke in coloured stars against the darkness of night.

The morning of departure Lady Hertford arranged a

[1] Contemporary Tract, printed in Nichols's *Progresses*. This is the first mention of "lawn" tennis, the game having been previously played with hard balls on a covered court.

dance of fairies on the lawn beneath the Queen's window. Round a silver pole surmounted by a crown they danced, singing:

"Elisa is the fairest Quene,
That ever trod upon this greene.
Elisa's eyes are blessed starres,
Inducing peace, subduing warres.

Elisæ's hand is christall bright,
Her wordes are balme, her lookes are light.
Elisæ's brest is that faire hill,
Where virtue dwels, and sacred skill,
O blessed bee each day and houre,
Where sweete Elisa builds her bowre."

Elizabeth, much pleased, requested a repetition of the performance, that the ladies who had not been present before might have a chance of witnessing it.

In the meanwhile it had come on to rain; "a most extreme rain," but the Queen, habitually indifferent to weather, ordered her coach to be ready at the appointed time. Very cordially did she bid good-bye to Frances and her husband, assuring them "the beginning, and end of this entertainment, was so honourable, she would not forget the same."

This promise proved shortlived, for before long the Earl of Hertford fell into dire disgrace, consequent on his attempting to establish the validity of his marriage with Lady Catherine Grey and the legitimacy of their sons.

Elizabeth considered this a menace to the succession, which she still refused to establish, and ordered her late host to the Tower forthwith.

Frances, dearly loving her husband, and knowing how

often the Tower proved an inhospitable bourne from whence prisoners never returned, became nearly crazy with grief, so that the report got abroad that Lady Hertford had "become starck mad."

Elizabeth heard and was troubled, for she loved Frances, and though she intended to keep the Earl a prisoner had no thought of beheading him. To quiet her friend's alarm she penned the following letter :—

"Goode Franche. Understanding your disposition to be troubled with sudden impressions, even in matters of little moment, we do not now forget you in your Lord's misfortunes, and therefore have thought it not amiss, even by our own handwriting (your ladyship's brother being absent whom otherwise we would have used) to assure you of our continuance of our former grace, and to preserve your spirit for those perturbations, which love is the person offending, and apprehension of the matter, so far unexpected, might daily have bred in you. It is not convenient to acquaint you with all the particular circumstances of his offence, neither would it avail you, who have been ignorant of all its causes; but (to prevent misapprehension that this crime is in its nature more pernicious and malicious than an act of lewd proud contempt against our direct prohibition), have vouchsafed to cause a ticket to be shown you by the bearer, which may resolve you from further doubting what is not and satisfy your mind for caring for that which care now remedies not, being a matter both proved by record, and confessed with repentance.

It is far from our desire to pick out faults in such as he; being slow to rigour towards the meanest, we will use no more severity than is requisite for others caution in like case, and that shall stand with honour and necessity. Your

ladyship will quickly judge when you understand it, that his offence can have no colour of imputation on you, and you will not be one jot less esteemed for any faults of his. You are therefore to trust this assurance, as the voice of that Prince to whose pure and constant mind you are no stranger, and comfort yourself that you have served one who still wishes you good, and cares to the contrary. For a farewell, you are to observe this rule, that seeing griefs and troubles make haste enough unsent for, to surprise us, there can be no folly greater than by fearing that which is not, to overthrow the health of mind and body, which once being lost the rest of your life is labour and sorrow, and work to God unaccepetable, and discomfortable to all our friends."[1]

Frances, taking heart from this letter, dressed herself in the meanest garments to express outward humility, and went to the place to seek an audience of the Queen. Catherine Howard could confidently assure her sister that neither the Earl's life nor estates were in danger, but it was some time before she obtained permission for the desired interview. Elizabeth had no objection to Lady Hertford remaining at the palace, constantly sending her comforting messages and "Broth's in a morning, and at meals, meat from her Trencher."[2] At length persistence and the claim of long friendship prevailed, and Frances obtained her husband's release, on payment of a heavy fine.

[1] *Calendar Domestic State Papers*, 1595.
[2] Collins' *Sydney Papers*

CHAPTER XX

LADY BRIDGET MANNERS and Lady Elizabeth Vere, who came to Court within a few weeks of each other, recalled memories of those early days of the Queen's reign when Mary Radcliffe and Catherine Howard, now the two "old maids" at Court, were among the merry, light-hearted Maids of Honour. Then the ladies of the privy chamber nourished hopeless infatuation for Elizabeth Vere's father, the Earl of Oxford, and had very real esteem for Bridget Manners's uncle, Edward, Earl of Rutland. The Earl of Oxford married Ann Cecil, and broke her heart; the Earl of Rutland wedded Isabel Holcroft, and became "a profound lawyer, and a man accomplished with all polite learning."[1] Elizabeth had intended making him Lord Chancellor had not his death supervened, when she appointed Sir Christopher Hatton instead.

As the Earl of Rutland left no son the title passed to his brother John, who died a year later, leaving his widow with a large family of young children to bring up. To help her, the Duchess of Bedford[2] suggested taking charge of the eldest girl, Bridget, to educate as her own daughter.

The Countess of Rutland, much occupied with business worries, and in perpetual friction with Isabel Holcroft, the other Countess of Rutland, readily agreed to the

[1] Camden.

[2] Bridget, d. of John, Lord Hussey, m., 1stly, Sir John Morrison, Kt.; 2ndly, Henry Manners, 2nd Earl of Rutland; 3rdly, Francis, Earl of Bedford.

proposal. At the same time, having but poor estimation of her daughter's capabilities, she informed Lady Bedford candidly that so far eleven-year-old Bridget had received practically no education; her one accomplishment, to play a little on the lute; her great detriment, a tendency to stoop.

Lady Bridget, with no furniture, few recommendations, and many admonitions to hold up her head, started off on her journey to Woburn in Bedfordshire, where she arrived safely without mishap by highway robbery or accident. The Countess of Bedford found her step-granddaughter such a charming, attractive girl that she decided not to bother about her neglected education, but to try and obtain for her the next vacancy in the Queen's privy chamber.

Lady Bedford did, however, feel some displeasure towards the Countess of Rutland for having sent her daughter with so few goods and chattels, and at her request Lady Bridget wrote to her mother:

"My Lady of Bedford did byd me send to your ladyship for a bed and for hangings for my chamber and a litel playte to set of my cubbard. She saith she wold have my chamber fyne when I wear at London, and if it pleas your Ladyship to send me such things, they shall by the grace of God be very well loaket too."[1]

The Countess of Rutland was not pleased at having to send the furniture, thinking "a lady so honourably minded as my Lady Bedford would have afforded my daughter furniture for her chamber in her house." Nor did

[1] Duke of Rutland's MSS., Hist. MSS. Com.

she approve the prospect of a Court appointment, hoping it would "not as yet fall so, for Bridget has no acquaintance in that place and is therefore most unfit for it."

Lady Bedford, delighted with the girl under her charge, thought otherwise, and continued to make interest at Court to such good purpose that Lady Bridget received the next appointment. The Countess of Rutland sent £200 to buy an outfit, coupled with the dubious hope that Bridget would "behave herself as shall be pleasing," and not disgrace her family by stooping at Court. None of Bridget's relations entertained the slightest anticipation she would bring them anything but discredit. They besought the girl's grand-uncle, Roger Manners, one of the esquires of the body, to write her a letter of admonition. On certain points did he lay emphasis, as befitting a lady of Her Majesty's privy chamber:

"First and above all thinges that you forgett not to use daly prayers to the Almightie God to endue you with his grace; then that you applie yourself hollye to the service of her majestie with all meeknes love and obediens; wherein you must be dyligent, secret and faythfull. To your elders and superiors, of reverent behaviour, to your equalles and fellow-servants syvill and courteys; to your inferiors you must show all favour and gentlenes. Generally that you be no medeler in the causes of others. That you use moch sylens, for that becometh maydes, especially of your calling. That your speach and indevars ever tend to the good of all and to the hurt of none. Thus in breve madam have you thes rules; which, if you have grace to follow you shall fynd the benefit, and your friendes shall rejoyce of your well doying."[1]

[1] Duke of Rutland MSS., Hist. MSS. Com.

To the above he added a postscript asking to be remembered to Mrs. Mary Radcliffe, and Bridget's brother, the young Earl of Rutland,[1] a Cambridge undergraduate of thirteen, subjoined another: "My uncle has given you good advice and we will pray that you may perform it."

To Court went Lady Bridget, with Mary Harding, one of the Countess of Rutland's waiting women, in close attendance, to chid her if she stooped, and give careful report of all concerning her.

Mistress and maid, used to quiet country ways, found the incessant round of gaiety rather a strain at first, Court life being not only more expensive, but "some thinge more painfuller than any wold judge," who had not been in actual attendance on Elizabeth.

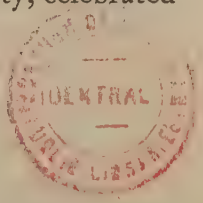
Mary Radcliffe, who had known Bridget's uncle so well in the past, took the new-comer under her kindly wing till the girl grew more accustomed to the strangeness of her surroundings. The Queen's "merry guardian," as the Courtiers called Mary Radcliffe, proved more like a mother than a stranger to Bridget, who soon settled down to her new duties.

Mary Harding, waiting up night after night for her young mistress, found "late watchinges and sittinges up are tedious." She assured the Countess of Rutland that Lady Bridget was "well liked of all, and endevorethe herself to be thankfull and to follow the cortely order in all pointes." Also, "for her stoupinge it is very little or

[1] Roger, 5th Earl of Rutland, m. Elizabeth, d. of Sir Philip Sidney.

none at all, and if I discerne it I will be redy to put her in mynde to forebeare the same, as it pleaseth you to command."

Lady Bridget's sunny nature made her friends wherever she went; further, to the amazement of her depreciative family, she blossomed forth as a Court beauty, celebrated in verse by an admiring poet.



"To the Beautiful Lady
The Lady Bridget Manners.

Rose of that garland! fairest and sweetest
Of all those sweet and fair flowers!
Pride of chaste Cynthia's rich crown!
Receive this verse, thy matchless beauty meetest!
Behold thy graces which thou greetest
And all the secret powers
Of thine, and such-like beauties, here set down!
Here thou shalt find thy frown!
Here, thy sunny smiling.
Fame's plumes fly with thy Loves' which should be fleetest!
Here, my love's tempests and showers!
Then read, sweet Beauty! whom my muse shall crown!
Who for thee! such a garland is compiling.
Of so divine scents and colours,
As is immortal time beguiling!
Your Beauty's most affectionate servant
Barnabe Barnes."

The surprised Countess of Rutland also received a letter written by the Queen's express command, commending "the exceedinge good modest and honorable behaviour and carriage of my Lady Bridget your daughter, with her carefull and dilligent attendance of Her Majestie ys to contentynge to her Highness and so commendable in this place where she lyves—where

vyces will hardly receive vysards and virtues most shyne—as Her Majestie acknowledgeth she hath cause to thanck you for her, and you may take comforte of so vertuouse a daughter, of whose beynge heere and attendance her majestie hath bidden me to tell your Ladyship, that you shall have no cause to repent."[1]

The Countess of Rutland expressed herself much honoured at this gratifying news, though she said she felt sure that "the gracious opinion the Queen has formed of my daughter's service, is no doubt far beyond what she is able to deserve."

For several years Lady Bridget remained in the privy chamber, growing increasingly in the Queen's favour. Elizabeth, who when she dined privately was waited upon by her ladies, made Bridget Manners act as her carver, Lady Mary Howard being appointed cup-bearer.

Bridget, despite the Queen's favour, and her own gift of making friends, would gladly have bartered the glamour and excitement of Court for a quiet home life. Mary Harding entirely shared her mistress's views; both were home-sick for the country. Marriage seemed the only way out, but not by any means an easy way. The Queen would certainly raise objections to Lady Bridget leaving her, nor was the girl herself easily satisfied in her choice of a husband, for at sixteen she had acquired much worldly wisdom. The Earl of Northumberland[2] made

[1] Duke of Rutland's MSS.

[2] Henry, 9th Earl of Northumberland, 1564–1632. Suggested as husband for Lady Arabella Stuart, but Elizabeth refused permission; he married Dorothy Devereux, widow of Sir Thomas Perrot.

advances, but Bridget, who cared nothing for a great position, would have none of him. Mary Harding, as she brushed her mistress's hair at night, passed all the eligible bachelors in view, and on July 5th, 1594, she sent the result of her inquiries to the Countess of Rutland:

The Court at Greenwich—"I besiche your ladyship will give me leave to put your honor in mynde of a mach for my Lady which your ladyship might procure. It would be better than eny she is lyke to get heare. My Lord Wharton,[1] I have asked her ladyship how she coulde lyke of it. She haith toulde me that she thought she should leve a more happier lyfe with him then with the greatest lorde heare. The worste is his children, but I thinke my lady so kynde a natur that she woulde ever love them and imagine them her owne. If it pleased God to blesse herselfe with any, she would be not doubte but he that sent them would provide for them. Truly if your honor coulde bringe it to passe, my lady woulde thinke herselfe very happye. I think if your Ladyshipe aske Mr. Manners his advice, he will speak stryghte of my Lorde of Bedforthe[2] or my Lorde of Southampton[3] which is excedinge unlikely. If they were in her choyse, she saithe she woulde chouse my Lord Wharton befor them, for they be so yonge and fanastycall and woulde be so caryed awaye, that if anything should come to your ladyshipe but good, being her only stay, she doutith ther carridge of themselves seinge som expearyence of the lyke in this place.

[1] Philip Lord Wharton, 3rd Baron, m. Lady Frances Clifford, d. of Henry, Earl of Cumberland. She left him a widower with five children.

[2] Edward, Earl of Bedford (1572–1627), m. Lucy, d. of John, Lord Harrington.

[3] Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, 1573–1624, m. Elizabeth, d. of Sir John Vernon, of Hodnet.

Therefore I thought good to acquaint your Ladyship with my Ladye's mynde as neare as I can, and woulde wishe it if it might stand with your honores pleasure; for if your Ladyship did know how weary my lady wer of the courte, and what littel gayne there is gotten in this tyme, Her Majestie's favorabel countenance excepted, which my lady haithe, your honour would willingly be contented with a meaner fortun to helpe her from hence. If your honor woulde ask Mr. Manners his advice he woulde have the moste conynge to gett her away. I think the nearest waye wer to fayne the messelles so she might have leve for a mounthe to see your Ladyship, to ayre her. And when she wer once withe youre honor, you might sue to gett the Quene's favor. It woulde be easily granted when she wer so far from her."[1]

The Countess of Rutland did not fall in with the idea of Bridget becoming stepmother to Lord Wharton's five children. She had just obtained the wardship of Mr. Robert Tyrrwhit[2] of Kettleby in Lincolnshire, and as a family feud had long been raging between the two houses the Countess of Rutland thought she saw an opportunity to bring it to an end by marrying the young heir to her daughter Bridget. Roger Manners, when consulted, cordially approved of the plan, the success of which now depended on getting Lady Bridget home to Belvoir Castle. There were obvious dangers in connection with Mary Harding's idea that her young mistress should pretend to have an attack of measles, so the Countess of

[1] Duke of Rutland's MSS.

[2] Son of William Tyrrwhit of Kettleby, and grandson of Sir Robert Tyrrwhit, whose wife had been governess to Queen Elizabeth.

Rutland wrote to Mary Radcliffe pleading her own ill health and a desire to see Bridget after five years' absence. Mary Radcliffe could manage to get most things she wanted from the Queen, and by her advocacy the girl received permission to leave Court for a month.

Home to Belvoir Castle went Lady Bridget, where she found Mr. Robert Tyrrwhit ready and waiting. The two young people were not unknown to each other, for Mr. Tyrrwhit had been one of the Queen's pages when twelve-year-old Bridget first went to Court, and they very willingly fell in with their elders' plan for a marriage between them.

Lady Bridget, weary of Court, rejoiced at the prospect of a home of her own; Robert Tyrrwhit was only too eager to install the Court beauty as Mistress of Kettleby; the Countess of Rutland, equally anxious, hurried matters on, and the marriage took place in the private chapel at Belvoir.

All parties concerned then waited in anxiety to see what would happen when the news reached the Queen that her lady carver had dared to marry without asking permission. Reports of Elizabeth's anger so exceeded the families' worst fears, that panic stricken they all sought to exculpate themselves from blame. The Countess of Rutland declared the wedding had taken place without either her knowledge or consent; Roger Manners protested that the subject had never even been mentioned to him; the bridegroom said he had no idea he was doing anything which could offend the Queen.

Elizabeth heard their excuses, unappeased and unbe-

lieving. The Countess of Rutland's friends at Court gave cold comfort:

"Her majestie neither by the sight of your ladyship's letter, nor by all the reasons they can use, will be persuaded to beleave your honor could be ignorant of it. Her majesty grounded this her conceipte upon the opinion her Highness hath long had of your ladyship's wisdom and of my Lady Bridget's obedience to you concludinge thereupon that a matter of such waight could not be done without your Ladyship's acquaintance, the same beinge no lesse than the marriage of your owne daughter in your owne house, and by your owne chaplain."

The bride and bridegroom were ordered to return to Court immediately, where it was thought Lady Bridget would "lye by the heeles upon the dyspleasure of her marriage, without leave."[1] Robert Tyrrwhit came to town, went to prison and fell ill; but three weeks passed, and still Lady Bridget had not come. Lord Hunsdon, the Lord Chamberlain, told the Countess of Rutland that the Queen considered herself "undutifullie handled at your hands," and it behoved her to despatch Lady Bridget "least her majesty do look further into that marriadge than yet she hath done."

Bridget, the favourite, came back to Court in disfavour, as with saddened face she passed through the presence chamber for an interview with her former mistress. Elizabeth had worked herself into one of her tantrums, but when Bridget, quiet, brave and straightforward, stood before her, not seeking to excuse her action, only anxious

[1] Philip Gaudy's *Letters*.

to take all the blame on her own shoulders so that others might not suffer, the Queen's anger melted. Bridget obtained forgiveness and her husband's release, Elizabeth ordered Lord Hunsdon to make it perfectly clear to the Countess of Rutland "that she doth not impute the fawlte so much to the young couple as to your Ladyship; for though my Lady Bridgett hath taken the fawlte upon herself to excuse your fawlte, yet her majesty is well assured that my Lady Bridget would never have married without your consent and speciall commandment, so as she thinkes your Ladyship more fawlteworthie than they."

Despite the husband's extravagance the marriage proved a happy one; even Bridget's family, still loath to award praise, admitted that Mr. Tyrrwhit made "a good husband, and she a passing good wife."

Three boys and one little daughter, "Briget," added to their mother's happiness, but she fell into ill health and "ended her transitorie lyfe in the tenth yere of her marriage." On her tomb in Bigby Church in Lincolnshire Robert Tyrrwhit placed the following inscription:

"Here lyeth the Right Honorable the Lady Brigett,
Daughter of John, Earle of Rutland and Rosse,
Baron Hemsley Trushitt and Belvoire
Wife to Robert Tyrrwhit of Ketelby esqr.
Sometime of the Privy Chamber to Queen Elizabeth
and in special grace and favor
Of speech affable, of countenance amiable,
Nothing proud of her place and fortunes,
and usynge her grace
Rather to benefit others than herselfe,

Who having been long visited with sicknesse,
the 10th day of July 1604
finished this mortall Life
Leaving behinde her fower children
William, Robert, Rutland, and Briget.
In memory of whom as also of himself
Whenever it shall please God to call him
from this vale of misery
Her deare husband Mr. Robert Tyrrwhit
At his coste erected this monument."

CHAPTER XXI

MAIDS of Honour came, and Maids of Honour left to become wives, mothers, and eventually grandmothers, but through all the changes Elizabeth remained resolutely the same,

"An ever young and most immortal goddess."[1]

Grow old she would not, clinging obstinately to the fond delusion that she alone among women was impervious to the ravages of time. A looking-glass would have shown her otherwise, but Elizabeth had long since ceased to place any faith in reflective mirrors, being "so farre from all niceness," that she trusted entirely to the ladies for "the comeliness of her attyre." The elaborately framed mirrors, once such a feature of the palace, had disappeared lest the Queen should behold herself as she was, a lean, haggard, over-dressed old woman, with the anxieties of years pooled in the depths of her lack-lustre eyes.

The courtiers, who with persistent deceitfulness commended their mistress's beauty, regarded the ladies' apartments with apprehension, for no amount of entreaty could induce the Maids of Honour to dispense with looking-glasses. They entered readily into the conspiracy to prevent the Queen seeing herself, but they saw no reason why such unnecessary self-denial should be extended to themselves. It therefore happened that when Elizabeth proposed to pass through the ladies' apartments efforts were

[1] Bussy D'Ambois, George Chapman.

made to restrain her, whilst courtiers hurried on ahead to hide any exposed mirrors. In their haste they frequently broke them, to the excessive annoyance of the fair owners.

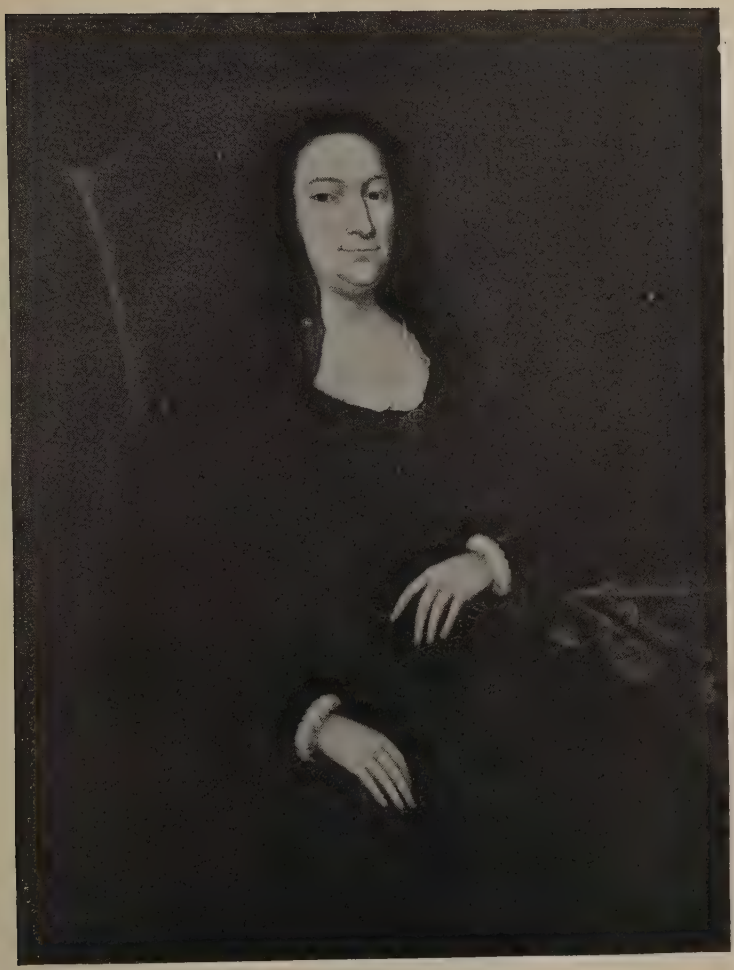
Certain painters and engravers, with more zeal for accuracy than flattery, called down the royal wrath upon themselves because they presumed to circulate pictures of the Queen, "to the offence and disgrace of that bewtyfull and magnanimious majesty wherewith God hath blessed her." Such portraits the Privy Council ordered to be destroyed, and no more to be issued, "but suche as her majesty's sergeant Paynter shall first have a sight of."[1]

Knowing the Queen's humour and weakness, the courtiers did not scruple to play upon her vanity by the most extravagant encomiums of a beauty which no longer existed save in her own imagination. On the occasion of a visit to Theobalds, Sir Robert Cecil contrived expression to the prevailing deceit, in the flattery offered by a supposed hermit:

"But that which most amazeth me, to whose long experience nothing can seem strange, is that with these same eyes I do behold you the self-same Queen, in the same estate of person, strength, beauty, in which so many years past I beheld you, finding no alteration, but in admiration, insomuch, that I am persuaded when I look about me on your train, that time which catcheth everybody, leaves only you untouched."

Indisputably Elizabeth's train had changed since the early years of the reign, for though Kate Carey (Countess of Nottingham), Ann Russell (Lady Warwick), Cecilia

[1] Acts of the Privy Council, 1586.



Coll. of Major Radclyffe

MARY RADCLYFFE

UK MYRAL

Knollys (Lady Leighton), Philadelphia Carey (Lady Scrope), Katherine Knevett (Lady Paget-Carey), Mary Shelton (Lady Scudamore), Mary Radcliffe and Catherine Howard, were with their mistress still; they had grown old in her service, and were stately grey-haired ladies who bore their years with dignity.

The gay company of knights—tilters, whose exploits provided themes in the far-off sixties, had laid aside their lances to become lookers-on at the tilt yard, where a new generation of courtiers worthily upheld the traditions of their fathers.

At length even Sir Henry Lee, "being now by age overtaken," felt that at last the time had come when he must relinquish the part of Queen's champion to a younger man. Elizabeth, "with a train of ladies, like the stars in the firmament,"[1] assembled in the gallery when Sir Henry Lee issued his final challenge on the thirty-third anniversary of her accession.

Sounded the trumpets, as a signal for Sir Henry Lee and the Earl of Cumberland[2] to open the tournament:

> "Mighty in arms, mounted on puissant horse,
> Knight of the crown, in rich embroidery,
> And costly fair caparison charged with crowns,
> O'ershadow'd with a wither'd running vine,
> As who would say, 'my spring of youth is past,'
> In corselet gilt of curious workmanship,
> Sir Henry Lee, redoubted man-at-arms,
> Leads in the troops: whom worthy Cumberland,
> Thrice-noble earl, accoutred as became
> So great a warrior and so good a knight,

[1] Higford's Institutions of a Gentleman.
[2] George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland, 1558–1605.

Encounter'd first y-clad in coat of steel,
And plumes and pendants all as white as swan,
And spear in rest, right ready to perform
What 'long'd unto the honour of the place.
Together went these champions, horse and man,
Thundering along the tilt; that at the shock
The hollow gyring vault of heavens resounds.
Six courses spent, and spears in shivers split."[1]

After the tilt Sir Henry Lee and the Earl of Cumberland approached the foot of the gallery where the Queen sat. At the same instant music sounded, and a temple of white taffeta appeared as if by magic, showing within a golden altar containing rich gifts. Three white-clad vestal virgins presented these to the Queen in the name of her retiring champion, for whose resignation a singer meanwhile gave explanation:

"My golden locks time hath to silver turn'd
(Oh time too swift, and swiftness never ceasing),
My youth 'gainst age, and age at youth hath spurn'd:
But spurn'd in vain, youth waneth by increasing,
Beauty, strength, and youth, flowers fading been,
Duty, faith, and love are roots and evergreen.

My helmet now shall make a hive for bees,
And lovers' songs shall turn to holy psalms;
A man at arms must now sit on his knees,
And feed on pray'rs that are old age's alms.
And so from Court to cottage I depart;
My saint is sure of mine unspotted heart.

And when I sadly sit in homely cell,
I'll teach my swains this carrol for a song
'Blest be the hearts that think my sovereign well,
Curs'd be the souls that think to do her wrong.'
Goddess, vouchsafe this aged man his right,
To be your beadsman now that was your knight."

[1] *Polyhymnia*, George Peele.

Sir Henry removed his armour, introduced the Earl of Cumberland as his successor as Queen's champion, then wrapping himself in a black velvet cloak he left the scene of his former triumphs. It was an affecting sight to see the old knight take leave of his youth, but Sir Henry did not settle down to the life of tranquil senility so touchingly foretold by the singer. A girl's eyes rekindled the fires of his heart, so that Sir Henry quite forgot to turn his helmet into a hive for bees, and conducted himself in such wise as to cause his patron saint to be extremely doubtful of receiving his soul in anything resembling a spotless condition. Mistress Ann Vavasour, who flourished "like the lily and the rose," was responsible for the rejuvenation of Sir Henry Lee, to the despair of her many young courtiers, who were at loss to conceive how she could prefer such an elderly admirer to themselves.

Elizabeth could better spare her knight champion than the lord treasurer, Burleigh, who, in feeble health and feeling the weight of his years, would gladly have relinquished office. Elizabeth would not permit this, though realizing the seriousness of his condition, saying "she did entreat Heaven daily for his longer life; else would her people, nay herself, stand in need of cordials too." Together they had stood shoulder to shoulder for more years than Elizabeth cared to remember; facing difficulties and dangers; loyal to each other and their country which owed years of peaceful security to their able statesmanship.

Lord Burleigh had brought up his daughter Ann's three little girls, and was very anxious to see the eldest, Elizabeth, happily married before he died. The Earl of Oxford

evinced some interest in his daughters, but this only quickened their grandfather's apprehension, fearing that after his death the Earl might contrive to get hold of them and dispose of them as he willed. If Elizabeth had a home, she would be in a position to shelter her younger sisters, so Lord Burleigh spoke very seriously to her on the subject of matrimony. He suggested the Earl of Northumberland, but the girl replied, as Bridget Manners had done, that she could "not fancy him."

Lord Burleigh thought the Earl of Southampton might prove more acceptable to his granddaughter, and accordingly wrote to his lordship's mother on the subject. The Countess gave ready assent, but found her son obdurate, for though he wished to marry one of the Maids of Honour, and an Elizabeth at that, her surname was Vernon, not Vere. Eventually Lord Burleigh contracted his pretty granddaughter to William, Earl of Derby, who had recently succeeded to the title on the death of his elder brother. The Queen took an active interest in the wedding festivities, arranging that the ceremony should take place at Greenwich Palace. She sent word to the Lord Treasurer that she should expect him to come and dance at the ball, but Lord Burleigh's dancing days were over, though he appreciated the kind thought prompting the invitation:

"For her hope to have me dance, I must have longer tyme to learn to go, but I will be ready in mynd to dance with my heart, when I shall behold her favourable disposition to do such honor to her mayd for the old man's sake."[1]

[1] *Queen Elizabeth and her Times*, T. Wright.

The Maids of Honour held high frolic at Elizabeth Vere's wedding, for the revels were kept up for several days with dancing, masques and theatrical performances. William Shakespeare, a member of the company of players under the patronage of Lord Derby's late brother, wrote a play called *Midsummer Night's Dream*,[1] to be performed before the Queen and newly married Earl and Countess of Derby.

Bride of the day might Elizabeth Vere be, but the dramatist inserted a delicate compliment to remind the audience that Elizabeth of England was the one peerless virgin whom all men desired, yet none could win:

"Since once I sat upon a promontory
And heard a mermaid, on a dolphin's back,
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,
That the rude sea grew civil at her song;
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
To hear the sea-maid's music.
That very time I saw (but thou couldst not),
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
Cupid all arm'd; a certain aim he took
At a fair vestal throned in the west:
And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow,
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts:
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the wat'ry moon
And the imperial vot'ress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.
Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell:
It fell upon a little western flower,
Before milk-white; now purple with love's wound:
And maidens call it love-in-idleness."

[1] *Midsummer-Night's Dream* is generally supposed to have been written especially for this Court wedding.

Right merrily laughed the wedding guests at "The most lamentable comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisbe," when lusty Bottom, the weaver, wooed Flute, the bellow's-mender, a coy Thisbe, chastely masked to conceal an incipient beard. Minor actors likewise gained full mead of applause; few could resist that "fearsome wildfowl" the lion, who roared as gently as any sucking dove, entreating the ladies not to be affrighted, for in very truth the lion's skin contained nothing more alarming than honest Snug, the joiner.

Snout, the tinker, tricked out with loam and rough cast, presented a comely wall, animated by engaging acts of courtesy.

> "Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,
> Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eye."

roared Pyramus, whereat the wall immediately held up two fingers arched to form a peep-hole. It received nothing but abuse in return:

> "O wicked wall, through which I see no bliss."

accused Pyramus, because forsooth, the bearded Thisby had failed to keep the appointment. The obliging wall kept its chink open till the lady arrived, and was entreated by her lover:

> "O kiss me through the hole in this Vile Wall."

After this crowning ingratitude, the maligned wall closed its chink and left the stage with dignity.

Moonshine next captivated the audience, when it entered adequately represented by a man, a bush and a dog

and a lantern; their component parts being explained by the man in order to prevent misapprehension.

"All I have to say; is, to tell you, that the lantern is the moon; and the man is the man in the moon: this thorn-bush my thorn bush; and this dog my dog."

Having set all doubts at rest, the moon took up its position on the stage and proceeded to shed "sunny beams" on the performers, till Pyramus thoughtfully suggested its departure before he committed suicide. The audience, however, had one more opportunity of beholding a favourite performer, for the moon returned later, accompanied by the lion, in order to bury the dead and tidy up the stage.

Elizabeth Vere's early married life began little better than her mother's had done, for the Earl of Derby proved a jealous husband. His young wife's smiles must be for him alone, and he would rather immune her in the depths of the country than that she should see or speak with other men. Young Lady Derby differing on this point, he suddenly took her away from London, desiring she should live "in a cell unseen," said her friends indignantly. Ladies at Court wrote to the lonely little bride, thereby causing fresh trouble, for the Earl would allow her to hold no communication with them. Young Lady Derby's "only defence was the patience of tears," but it roused the championship of the household, so that "they all went to my lord when he was booked to go to Court and leave my lady here to shift for herself, and told him that as they had served him and his father and been the same by them,

if he held this jealously in that force as he did, themselves seeing my lady's carriage of herself and managing my lordship's estate with what honourable care of his house himself that never any the like, if he would hate her and not desist from this humour, they must all hate him and follow her in those honourable courses she professeth and performeth, wishing him to desist from this jealousy and bitterness to her ladyship, and not dishonour himself, or else they would hate him."[1]

Lady Derby's relations, too, intervened, Lord Robert Cecil writing "to comfort her," and to the Earl in plain terms, telling him he must treat his wife more kindly. The Earl of Oxford also bade the bridegroom remember how "young and tender" the girl bride was. In the end their entreaties, backed by influence, prevailed, and young Lady Derby returned to take her place in London society.

[1] Salisbury MSS., Vol. VII.

CHAPTER XXII

ROBERT DEVEREUX, the young Earl of Essex, occupied a unique place in the Queen's affection. Elizabeth, though she would not admit it, was ageing, and with creeping time came the tragedy of a lonely old age. Strong-willed, self-reliant woman that she was, Elizabeth, with no ties of kindred, came to feel the need of some outlet for her affection. Unfortunately, both for herself and for him, she chose for this purpose the son of her cousin and one time friend, Lettice Knollys.

Elizabeth at first humoured the youth as a boy, then grew to love him, not as she had done his stepfather, the Earl of Leicester, lover of her youth, but with the self-centred love of old age. He formed an object for her thoughts, some one to think of, plan for, with the jealousy of intense affection.

Lettice Knollys, who soon after the Earl of Leicester's death had married his equerry, Sir Christopher Blount, lived with him at Drayton Basset in Staffordshire. To Court she might not come, and with the ban of Elizabeth's displeasure upon her she could participate but little in the social life at town. Exiled in the country, Lettice hungered for news of her dearly loved son who had embarked on the ambitious, albeit dangerous, rôle of Queen's favourite. Lettice knew her cousin well; in the arrogance of her own girlish beauty she had triumphantly wrested the Earl of Leicester's allegiance. Elizabeth had neither forgiven nor forgotten, for in love or hatred she ever

proved relentless, and Lettice fretted sorely for her boy, who proved a negligent correspondent.

"Your Lordship is grown, I will not say slothful, but somewhat sparing of your pen, in relieving your absent friends both with news of your welfare, and other accounts (of things) there happening, which we cannot but desire to hear of this dangerous time. Wherefore, do not think to excuse yourself by much business, which I know you want not; for I must have you, notwithstanding, bestow sometime a few idle lines on your mother, to whom they are most welcome, and who otherwise may grow jealous that you love her not so well as she deserves, which blot I know you will take away. And, as she hath made you the chief comfort of her life, so I doubt not of your noble nature, but that you will be careful to maintain it with all childlike kindness. So, sweet Robin, praying the Almighty to bless you with all most honourable happy fortune, I end, remaining ever your mother infinitely loving you,

L. LEICESTER."

Essex, petulant, wayward, fully aware of his hold over the Queen, treated her with wilful caprice. He would have all her favours shown to him alone, flaring out in anger if she showed partiality to any other. Charles Blount,[1] another aspiring courtier, happening to distinguish himself one day at tilt, Elizabeth sent him a richly enamelled gold chess Queen in appreciation of his prowess. The young man, flattered at the compliment, appeared next day at Court with the token tied round his arm by a crimson ribbon. That all might see, and seeing envy, he

[1] Second son of James, 6th Lord Mountjoy, succeeded his brother as Lord Mountjoy, 1594.

walked through the presence chamber carrying his cloak instead of wearing it. In triumphant progress through the room he encountered my Lord of Essex, who, turning to Fulke Greville, inquired what such ostentatious wearing of a token meant.

"It is the Queen's favour," replied Greville.

"Now I perceive that every fool must have his favour," sneered Essex.

This uncomplimentary remark reaching Blount's ears he at once sent the Earl a challenge. The duel took place in Marylebone Park, when Essex received a wound in his thigh. Honour being satisfied, the two enemies made up their differences and became fast friends. Hearing of the fray the Queen swore, "By God's death it were fitting some one should take the young Earl down and teach him better manners, or there would be no rule with him."

Essex soon made his peace as well he knew how; a caressing gesture, a few endearing words, such were treasures to Elizabeth by their rarity. The flowing compliments which slipped so easily from Raleigh's facile tongue were difficult to Essex. Indeed, his flattery of the Queen was so stilted that Sir Francis Bacon took him to task on the subject, saying, "a man may read your formality in your countenance; whereas it ought to be done familiarly and with an air of interest."

Frances Walsingham, Sir Philip Sidney's widow, could have told the Queen the difference between my Lord of Essex's real and artificial love-making, for her he wooed, won and secretly married. The news when it came to the Queen's ears caused her paroxysms of jealous misery which

preyed alike on mind and temper. The whole Court in general, and the ladies of the privy chamber in particular, suffered vicariously as an apprehensive courtier informed Lord Talbot:

"If she could overcome her passion against my lord of Essex for his marriage, no doubt she would be much quieter; yet doth she use it more temperately than was thought for, and God be thanked, doth not strike *all* she threats. The Earl doth use it with good temper, concealing his marriage as much as so open a matter may be; not that he denies it to any, but for her majesty's better satisfaction is pleased that my lady shall live very retired in her mother's house."[1]

Before long both Queen and wife had common cause together, for neither could claim Essex's vagrant affection for long, and he began to pay great attention to Lady Mary Howard, Her Majesty's pretty cup-bearer. That young lady, having caught the favourite's eye, did her best to keep it, in pursuance whereof she decked herself out,

> "With silken coats and caps and golden rings,
> With ruffs and cuffs and farthingales and things;
> With scarfs and fans and double change of bravery."[2]

Very pretty indeed looked dainty little Lady Mary in her new velvet dress embroidered with pearls, the richness whereof "moved manie to envye." The other girls admired it excessively, but they doubted the advisability of wearing it in the Queen's presence; for when spread out in all its glory over a stiff farthingale it was by no means a dress suitable to form part of an inconspicuous background.

[1] Lodge's *Illustrations*, Vol. II. [2] *Taming of the Shrew*, IV, 3.

Lady Mary, a self-willed little star desirous of twinkling as brightly as possible in defiance of the Majestic sun, gave no heed to such prudent comments, and determined to wear the dress at the earliest opportunity. In preparation for the next Court function Lady Mary's tire-woman had an exacting task, but there was every reason to be proud of her handiwork when the young lady stood ready to join the other Maids of Honour in the presence chamber.

The Queen, gorgeously clad and loaded with jewels, sat beneath a canopy of state; whilst the Maids of Honour grouped themselves to form a silvery setting, Lady Mary Howard, in her beauty and gay attire, stood out from the background nearly as effectually as Elizabeth, a radiant, dazzling little sun who succeeded in attracting the attention of the Earl of Essex as she wished, and of the Queen which she did not desire.

Elizabeth's brow darkened, scenting a rival. Lady Mary daringly confirmed the suspicion by wearing the dress again and again, looking more bewitchingly pretty on each occasion. The Queen, though holding resolutely to the delusion that her own beauty remained unimpaired by the ravages of time, did occasionally experience faint qualms on the subject. These she stifled by the comforting theory that outward magnificence in apparel discounted wrinkles; therefore she held that Lady Mary attracted the Earl of Essex solely by a dress quite unsuited in magnificence for a chit of a girl.

Long brooding over the matter, Elizabeth resolved on revenge, and sent a waiting woman to fetch the dress from Lady Mary's bedroom. Close examination confirmed its

richness; the Queen must needs try it on. She was tall, Lady Mary small, so the dress proved too short and too tight; both fresh causes for resentment. Still wearing it, Elizabeth marched out of her own apartments into the Maids of Honours' sitting-room.

The girls, looking up from their work and books, beheld an astonishing sight. Lady Mary Howard's dress undoubtedly—they recognized it immediately—but instead of Lady Mary's piquant little face, framed by a lace ruff they beheld the painted features of their mistress, whilst the diminutiveness of the gown revealed more than was comely of bare arm and silk-stockinged legs. There was a glint in the Queen's eye, too, that betokened trouble, and the girls inwardly thanked their stars that they did not stand in Lady Mary's embroidered slippers.

Elizabeth pranced up and down the room, a grotesque, mirth-provoking sight if the ladies had not been far too perturbed for their own safety to see anything amusing in it. The Queen further added to their discomfort by begging them to say how they liked her "new fancy suit." At length, halting before the owner of the dress, Elizabeth asked specifically for her opinion.

Elizabeth being Queen, and Lady Mary one of her ladies, it was out of the question to say what she really thought of the liberty taken with her dress, so she remained obstinately silent. The new wearer, not to be put off, demanded if it "was not made too short and ill-becoming."

Lady Mary with rather too much alacrity agreed. "Why then," snapped the Queen, "if it becomes not me

as being too short, I am minded it shall never become you as being too fine, so it fitteth neither well."[1]

Lady Mary's resentment smouldered over the loss of her dress, and in revenge she flirted more than ever with my Lord of Essex, to the neglect of her Court duties. When the Queen walked in the garden, Lady Mary refused to carry her cloak; being well chidden on this account she answered back. Elizabeth was not accustomed to being answered back by anybody, least of all by one of her own Maids of Honour, and extremely choleric did it render Her Majesty.

The Queen went to prayers; but no Lady Mary walked in her train with the other Maids of Honour. Neither did she come to assist in laying Her Majesty's table for dinner, a ceremony performed with much veneration by the ladies during service time. Two of them entered the room, one carrying a tasting knife; three deep curtsies they made, then proceeded to rub the plates with bread and salt. Up came twenty-four stalwart yeomen of the guard, scarlet clad, with a golden Tudor rose blazoned on their backs. Each man carried a dish, wherein the lady taster dipped her knife, giving every man a mouthful of the dish he carried, so that if poison had been introduced into its composition, the effect should immediately become apparent in the health of the yeoman waiter. The tasting ceremony ended, the Maids of Honour took charge of the dishes and carried them into the Queen's apartments, for except on public festivals she dined in private, waited upon by her ladies.

[1] Sir J. Harrington's *Nugæ Antiquæ*.

Lady Mary Howard filled the office of cup-bearer, but when the Queen wished to drink no Lady Mary was forthcoming. Elizabeth's anger grew apace, fed by the thought that if Lady Mary was not where she should be—on her knees holding "the cup of grace"—she was undoubtedly where she should not be, namely, in the company of the Earl of Essex.

Lady Mary, when scolded for "an ungracious flouting wench," shrugged rebellious shoulders and continued to defy the Queen's authority, to the alarm of her friends, for it was no light thing to sink so deeply in Her Majesty's displeasure. They gave the wilful beauty much good advice, beseeching her "to be more dutiful, and not to absent herself at meals, or prayers, to bear her Highnesses' mantle and other furniture, even more than all the rest of the servants to make ample amends by future diligence; and always to go first in the morning to her Highness's chamber, forasmuch as such kindness will much prevail to turne away all former displeasure. She must not entertaine my lord the Earl in any conversation, but shunne his companye; and moreover be less carefull in attiringe her own person, for this seemethe has done more to win the Earl, than her mistress's goodwill."[1]

The favourites indulged in flirtations with the Maids of Honour as much to vary the monotony of Court life as for any other reason. Young ambitious men like Essex and Blount thirsted for adventure or martial glory, but such hazardous enterprises were not for those who had won a niche in the Queen's affections. Remembering how Philip

[1] Sir J. Harrington's *Nugæ Antiquæ*.

Sidney met his death in battle, she would run no more risks. Favourites might fret, fume and entreat, but all to no purpose; set foot on the path which might lead indiscriminately to death or glory they should not. Sir Charles Blount made a bolt for it and joined the troops abroad, but the commanding general received prompt orders to send him back at once. The Queen reproached the would-be warrior angrily: "Serve me so once more, and I will lay you fast enough for running. You will never leave it until you are knocked on the head, as that inconsiderate fellow Sidney was. You shall go when I send you, and in the meantime see that you lodge in the Court, where you may follow your book, read and discourse of the wars."[1]

Essex laid his plans better when he secretly resolved to go with the expedition, setting forth to assist the Portuguese against the Spaniards. He wrote forty letters to the Queen and Council in which he declared his inviolable intention of going to sea, coupled with the resolution, "not to be stayed by any commandment excepting death." Stealing away from Court, he started off for Plymouth as fast as relays of horse could go. Knowing pursuit would assuredly follow hot on his heels, he persuaded the captain of the *Swiftsure* to set sail without waiting for the rest of the fleet. By this means the favourite was well out to sea before his uncle, Sir William Knollys, arrived at Plymouth with peremptory orders for his return to Court.

Short was my lord's freedom; great his daring while it lasted. Wading through the surf, he was the first man to set foot on the Portuguese shore. At Lisbon with

[1] Naunton's *Fragmenta Regalia.*

exaggerated bravado he approached the gates, challenging any Spaniard within the town to come out and fight him single-handed.

Other deeds of derring-do would he have had to his credit had not vessels arrived from England bearing such angry letters from the Queen, that Sir Francis Drake in alarm refused to be answerable any longer for so precious a personage as Her Majesty's chief favourite, and back to England perforce had my Lord of Essex to go.

CHAPTER XXIII

AN autumn progress, when Elizabeth visited Lady Russell[1] at Bisham and Lord and Lady Chandos[2] at Sudley, resulted in the appointments of Elizabeth and Anne Russell, and Elizabeth Bridges, to places in the privy chamber. Sheep farming had brought wealth to the breezy Cotswolds, and when Elizabeth came to Court, as her aunts, Catherine and Eleanor Bridges, had done before her, the account of her reputed wealth occasioned great excitement. She had been sought in marriage since the age of seven, when her mother wrote specifically to the Earl of Rutland concerning the child's dowry.

"My Lord and I do not doubt your plain dealing in this matter which touches us nearest of anything in the world, and therefore we are ready to inform you what revenue and portion will come to Bess. On these points my Lord says that if he have no son he will assure Studley to her after his and my decease, and that he will give her a lordship called Elton, immediately upon her marriage, which will be worth £600 a year within eight years of the marriage. If my Lord have a son she shall have £4000 more which will be charged upon Studley. When it was desired to know my maid's liking she answered that for the little time she was in my lord's company she saw

[1] Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Anthony Cook, and sister of Lady Burleigh and Lady Bacon. She married, 1st, Sir Thomas Hobby; 2ndly, Lord Russell.

[2] Giles, 2nd Lord Chandos, had no son, his two daughters, Elizabeth, aged sixteen, and Catherine, aged fourteen, being his heiresses.

nothing in him but what was worthy of commendation. As for the suitors, I cannot deny these are of the best sort who are anxious to marry her. We have another daughter[1] of five years of age. My lord is desirous to understand the young lords estate and what jointure he will give, and if these offers are agreed to and liked, my lord would have the match concluded without delay."[2]

Negotiations for this match fell through, and "Bess" arrived at Whitehall aged fifteen, "a very fine gentlewoman, very fayre, and a great rich marriage,"[3] as a Court gossip chronicled. The girl might have great expectations, and a set of diamonds calculated to arouse the envy of all the ladies in the privy chamber, but during her father's lifetime she was uncommonly short of ready money. Young, inexperienced, and naturally extravagant, Elizabeth very soon ran through her allowance and got into debt. She dared not apply to her father for more money, nor did she like to approach her grandmother, "old lady Chandos"[4] who lived with her second husband, Sir William Knollys, in a house adjoining the tilt yard. Creditors proving insistent, Elizabeth pledged one of her diamonds with a merchant in St. Paul's churchyard. This expedient afforded only temporary relief, and when

[1] Catherine, married Francis, Lord Russell, afterwards Earl of Bedford.

[2] Duke of Rutland's MSS., Hist. MSS. Com.

[3] Philip Gaudy's *Letters*.

[4] Dorothy, d. and heiress of Edmund Lord Braye. She was the mother of Catherine and Eleanor Bridges. After Lord Chandos's death in 1573 she married Sir William Knollys, a man many years younger than herself.

Coll. of the Duke of Bedford

ELIZABETH BRIDGES AS A GIRL OF 14

GENERAL
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Lord Chandos died, a few weeks later, the heiress wanted her portion at once without waiting for legal formalities.

One, Charles Lister, knowing Mistress Bridges's present poverty and future wealth, determined to make use of one to obtain the other. In the course of an interview he proposed himself as a suitor, promising that if accepted he would advance her what money she needed for present necessities.

Elizabeth, though she would make no definite promise, said she would think the matter over, on the strength of which Mr. Lister made her a present of a pearl chain, and advanced £150 in cash; further, he undertook to redeem her diamonds. Money melted away in Elizabeth's fingers, and very soon she wanted more: £150 to invest in a sea-going venture, and £10 to pay a doctor's bill. These sums she wheedled out of Mr. Lister, as well as a set of tapestry for her bedroom, and a £30 silver ewer and basin. Satisfied with his choice in these articles, she next commissioned her love to visit the mercers' shops in Cheapside, to buy "some taffeta to make her a saveguard, also some lawn for ruffs, linen and other things to the value of £30."[1]

These orders fulfilled and the diamonds restored to their owner, Charles Lister gave Mistress Bridges a pendant which delighted her so much, that she declared it should be a token between them for the rest of their lives.

On the strength of this the gentleman pressed for a formal betrothal, but on this point Mistress Bridges

[1] Affidavitt of Charles Lister. *Domestic State Papers*, 1598.

proved so elusive that it gradually dawned on him that she had no intention of marrying him. Resolved on this point, Mr. Lister at once instituted legal proceedings for the recovery of all presents and money advanced.

The girl's wealth, which exposed her to the wiles of fortune hunters, also formed the subject of bickering with her uncle William, Lord Chandos, who had succeeded to the title. Efforts were made to bring about a marriage between Elizabeth and her cousin, Grey Brydges[1] "whereby all suits and quarrels should be concluded."[2]

This fell through, when Sir Robert Cecil, also mentioned as a possible husband for the lady, tried "to compose the difference between Lord Chandos and Mistress Brydges, and engaged that if she might have Sudley for life, she would leave all her title and interest to the inheritance but he takes advantage of her disgrace and hopes to possess it shortly."[3]

The disgrace alluded to meant that the Earl of Essex had looked too favourably upon Elizabeth Bridges, and the Queen was jealous. An alarmed Court watched the flirtation in dismay; one letter writer in cautious cipher voiced the consternation of many:

"I know you will be sorry to hear what grives me to wryte of; yt is spied out by envy that 1,000 (Essex) is

[1] Grey Brydge, 5th Lord Chandos, kept such open house that he was called "King of Cotswold." He married Lady Anne Stanley, daughter and co-heir of Ferdinando, 5th Earl of Derby. He died August 10, 1621.

[2] *Letters of John Chamberlain.* [3] *Domestic State Papers.*

again fallen in love with his fairest B. Yt cannot chuse but come to 1,500 (Queen's) ears; and then he is undone, and all they that depend on his favour."[1]

Elizabeth Bridges brought matters to a head one afternoon, by persuading Bess Russell to slip away from the privy chamber, in order to watch the Earl of Essex play at Balloon, in one of the covered courts in the palace grounds. The game waxed fast and furious as my Lord of Essex, stimulated by the knowledge that Mistress Bridges sat among the spectators in the gallery, hit the leather wind balls to and fro.

Presently came interruption; a message to say that Her Majesty commanded the immediate return of Mistress Bridges and Mistress Russell. The truants returned to the privy chamber in no little perturbation, nor were their fears by any means unfounded, when they stood downcast before a very angry mistress. Elizabeth indeed "used the fair Mistress Brydges with words and blows of anger,"[1] and banished both girls from Court for three days by way of punishment.

Though Elizabeth Bridges might be the greatest heiress at Court, she had a rival and namesake in the city, Mistress Elizabeth Spencer, only daughter of Sir John Spencer[2] formerly Lord Mayor of London. Many courtiers would like to have married "Rich Spencer's" only child, and the young lady inclined quite favourably

[1] Collins' *Sydney Papers*.

[2] Sir John Spencer, a successful merchant, trading largely with Spain, Turkey and Italy, Lord Mayor 1584–5. Kept his Mayoralty with great magnificence at Crosby Place in Bishopsgate Street. Queen Elizabeth visited him at Canonbury House, Islington.

to Lord Compton[1], famous for his prowesss in the tilt yard, where he appeared as the "White Knight."

> "His courser trapp'd in white, and plumes and staves
> Of snowy hue, and squires in fair array,
> Waiting their lord's good fortune in the field;
> His armour glittering like the moon's bright rays,
> On that clear silver path, the milk-white way,
> That in Olympus leads to Jove's high Court."[2]

Unfortunately, the lady's consent alone did not suffice, and Sir John flatly refused to give his. As Mistress Elizabeth still proved obstinate, her father, to demonstrate his complete authority over a disobedient child, chastised her soundly and shut her up. The girl, spoilt and indulged all her life hitherto, was infuriated at such treatment, and found means to communicate with her lover. Lord Compton, having Court influence behind him, managed to get Sir John Spencer, one time Lord Mayor of London, committed to the Fleet prison on the charge of having ill treated his only daughter. He soon obtained release, and returned home more determined than ever that the spoilt little hussy should not marry my Lord Compton. Elizabeth having inherited her parent's obstinacy, was equally resolved that she would, though finding herself so closely guarded escape seemed well-nigh impossible.

Lord Compton set his wits to work, with the result that, in disguise as a baker's man, he obtained entrance to

[1] William, son of Henry, 1st Lord Compton. Created Earl of Northampton, died 1630.

[2] *Polyhymnia*, George Peele.

Canonbury House, carrying the large basket of his supposed calling. When he left a little later bearing the basket on his back, it contained not wheaten loaves, but Mistress Elizabeth Spencer, the city heiress.

The irate father, when he discovered the elopement, promptly disowned his daughter, nor did he show the slightest signs of relenting when Lady Compton made him a grandfather. Things began to look rather blue for the rash young couple, who carried the tale of their woe to Queen Elizabeth. She promised to bring about a reconciliation with Sir John Spencer, and also to stand godmother to the baby. In pursuance of this plan the Queen wrote to Sir John asking if he would stand fellow gossip with her at the christening of a child of a young couple in whom she was interested. Sir John accepted, and at the christening ceremony Elizabeth named the child Spencer after his godfather. Sir John, in high good humour, assured the Queen that, having disowned his daughter, he intended to take great interest in little Spencer, and to make him his heir. On hearing these encouraging words Lord and Lady Compton, who had remained hidden spectators of the christening ceremony, stepped from behind the arras, revealed the baby's parentage, and received Sir John's pardon.

Lady Compton, translated from city to Court, held very decided ideas as to the state appertaining to a lady of title, and when her husband came into some money she definitely defined her wishes:

"My sweet Life,—Now I have declared to you my mind for the settling of your estate, I supposed that that

were best for me to bethink or consider with myself what allowance were meetest for me. For considering what ease I ever had of your estate, and how respectfully I dealt with those, which both by the law of God, of nature, and civil polity, is religion, government, and honesty, you, my dear, are bound to, I pray and beseech you to grant to me, your most kind and loving wife, the sum of £1600 per annum, quarterly to be paid. Also I would, besides that allowance for my apparel, have £600, added yearly (quarterly to be paid) for the performance of charitable works, and these things I would not, neither will be accountable for.

Also I will have three horses for my own saddle, that none shall dare to lend or borrow; none lend but I, none borrow but you.

Also I would have two gentlewomen, lest one should be sick or have some other lett. Also believe that it is an indecent thing for a gentlewoman to stand mumping alone when God hath blessed their Lord and Lady with a great estate.

Also when I ride a hunting, or a hawking, or travel from one house to another, I will have them attending. So for either of these said women, I must and will have for either of them a horse.

Also I will have six or eight gentlemen; and I will have my two coaches, one lined with velvet for myself, with four very fair horses; and a coach for my women, lined with sweet cloth, one laced with gold, the other with scarlet, and lined with watched lace and silver, with four good horses.

Also I will have two coachmen, one for my own coach, the other for my women.

Also at any time when I travel, I will be allowed not only carroches and spare horses for me and my women, but I will have such carriages as shall be fitting for all,

orderly, not posturing my things with my women's, not theirs with chamber-maids, not theirs with wash-maids.

Also for laundresses, when I travel, I will have them sent away before with the carriages to see all safe; and the chamber-maids I will have go before with the grooms, that the chambers may be ready, sweet and clean.

Also, for that it is undecent to crowd up myself with my gentleman-usher in my coach, I will have him to have a convenient horse, to attend me either in city or country. And I must have two footmen. And my desire is, that you defray all the charges for me. And for myself, besides my yearly allowance, I would have twenty gowns of apparel, six of them excellent good ones, eight of them for the country, and six other of them very excellent good ones.

Also I will have it put in my purse, £2,000 and £200; and so you to pay my debts.

Also I would have £6,000 to buy me jewels, and £4,000 to buy me a pearl chain.

Now, seeing I have been and am so reasonable unto you, I pray you find all my servants, and men and women, their wages.

Also I will have all my house furnished, and all my lodging chambers to be suited with all such furniture as is fit; as beds, stools, chairs, suitable cushions, carpets, silver warming pans, cupboards of plate, fair hangings, and such like. So to my drawing-chamber in all houses, I will have them delicately furnished, both with hangings, couch, canopy, glass, carpet, chair, cushions, and all things therewith belonging.

Also my desire is, that you would pay your debts, build Ashly House, and purchase lands; and lend no money, as you love God, to the Lord Chamberlain,[1] which would have all, perhaps your life, from you.

[1] Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, made Treasurer 1603.

Remember his son, my Lord Walden, what entertainment he gave me when you were at the tilt yard. If you were dead, he said he would be a husband, a father, a brother, and said he would marry me. I protest I grieve to see the poor man have so little wit and honesty to use his friend so vilely. Also he fed me with untruths concerning the Charterhouse; but that to the least he wished me much harm: you know him, God keep you and me from him, and any such.

So now that I have declared to you what I would have, and what there is I would not have, I pray when you be an Earl, to allow me £1,000 more than now desired, and double attendance.

Your loving wife,

Eliza Compton."[1]

[1] Goodman's *Court of King James*. On the death of her father, Lady Compton inherited a fortune of £300,000, which so exceeded her husband's expectations that he nearly lost his wits.

CHAPTER XXIV

HENRY WRIOTHESLEY, 3rd Earl of Southampton, succeeded Sir Philip Sidney as chief literary patron of the day. Thomas Nash acclaimed him "as a dear lover and cherisher as well of the lovers of poets as of the poets themselves." Camden, Barnes, Chapman, Daniel, Markham, all paid tribute to his interest in literature, summed up in the elegy by Sir John Beaumont:

> "I keep that glory last, which is the best;
> The love of learning, which he oft exprest
> By conversation, and respect to those
> Who had a name in arts, in verse or prose."

The theatre in particular owed much to Southampton's championship during the days of its early difficulties. Strolling players, classified under statute as "Rogues and Vagabonds," met with strenuous opposition when they strove to standardize their profession by the establishment of public theatres. Proprietors of the Paris Gardens at Southwark made loud outcry that, if allowed on weekdays, the counter-attraction would ruin the "sweet and comfortable sport of bear baiting." Plays then being licensed on Sundays, Gosson in his *School of Abuse* declared that theatrical companies, "because they are allowed to play every Sunday, make four or five Sundays at least every week." The Puritans, too, who hated bear gardens much, but theatres more, grumbled that the noise made by the drums and trumpets drowned the sound of the church bells.

Notwithstanding opposition public interest in the drama rapidly increased, backed as it was by the powerful patronage of the Queen and the nobility. Among the latter the Earl of Southampton took chief place, being not only the patron, but warm friend of William Shakespeare,[1] who in the dedication of *The Rape of Lucrece* wrote:

"The love I dedicate to your Lordship is without end; whereof this phamphlet without begining, is but a superfluous moiety. The warrant I have of your honourable disposition, not the worth of my untutor'd lines, makes it assured of acceptance. What I have is yours; what I have to do is yours; being part in all I have, devoted yours. Were my worth greater, my duty would show greater; meantime, as it is, it is bound to your Lordship, to whom I wish long life, still lengthen'd with all happiness."

Several of Shakespeare's plays were produced at Court, to the very great delight of Elizabeth and her ladies. So unrestrainedly did they all laugh at the heroic adventures of Sir John Falstaff in *King Henry IV*, that the Queen expressed a desire to see him play the part of lover. Shakespeare speedily gratified this wish by writing *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, where the fat knight disported himself with Mistress Page and Mistress Quickly, the scene being set in Her Majesty's own royal park at Windsor.

Throughout all these amusements, the Earl of Southampton did "with too much familiarity court the faire

[1] Southampton has been suggested as the original of Mr. "W.H." of Shakespeare's sonnets.

Mistress Vernon."[1] The unwisdom of this course was apparent to all, for though not beloved by the Queen as his friend, the Earl of Essex, yet he enjoyed a considerable amount of her favour, and young men who attained such distinction might not pay attention to the Maids of Honour with any safety.

Matters came to a head when the Earl got into trouble through making too much noise in the presence chamber after the Queen had retired to rest. He, with Sir Walter Raleigh (recently received back into favour), and other courtiers playing a game of Primero, grew so uproarious that Ambrose Willoughby, an esquire of the body, bade them be quiet or they would disturb Her Majesty. As they paid no heed to this admonition, Sir Ambrose threatened to call in the guard, whereat Sir Walter Raleigh, seeing how far things had gone, put up his cards and left the room. The Earl of Southampton followed, but in anger, meditating revenge. Next morning, chancing to meet Sir Ambrose by the tennis court, he struck him, whereupon Sir Ambrose caught hold of the Earl's long auburn curls and pulled out a handful with vengeful force. Great to-do followed, but the Queen upheld Sir Ambrose, "and told hym he had donne better, if he had sent hym to the porter's lodge to see who durst have fetched him out."

Southampton, considering himself affronted, requested leave to travel abroad, though at the very thought "his fayre mistress doth wash her fairest face with too many tears." As Sir Robert Cecil happened to be going over to

[1] Rowland Whyte to Sir Robert Sidney.

France, Southampton accompanied him, leaving behind "a very desolate gentlewoman that hath almost wept out her fairest eyes."[1]

Life might be a drear matter for Elizabeth Vernon, but the other Maids of Honour, unaffected by the Earl of Southampton's departure, found a new excitement in the rivalry between Margaret Ratcliffe[2] and Lady Kildare[3] for the affection of Lord Cobham.[4] Both ladies flaunted exceedingly in gay apparel, and on Shrove Sunday, 1597, Margaret Ratcliffe, whose indulgent brother, Alexander Ratcliffe, kept her well supplied with pocket money, presented a striking contrast to poor woebegone Elizabeth Vernon, as a visitor to Court bore testimony:

"Yesterday did Mistress Ratcliffe weare a whyte satten gown, all embrodered, rich cutt upon cloth of silver that cost £180. But the farest doth take pleasure in nothing since the departure of her beloved. Her garments, countenance, and gestures, witness no less; besides a kind of unwonted solitarines which is familiar unto her."[5]

Elizabeth Vernon spent all the time she could with her cousin and great friend, Penelope Rich, now one of the ladies of the bedchamber. Both Lettice Knollys's daughters were unhappily married and frequently lived apart from their husbands. Penelope had been forced into

[1] Collins' *Sydney Papers.*

[2] Daughter of Sir Alexander Ratcliffe of Ordsall.

[3] d. of Lord Charles Howard and Kate Carey. Widow of Henry, Earl of Kildare.

[4] Henry Brooke, 8th Lord Cobham.

[5] Collins' *Sydney Papers.*

Coll. of the Duke of Buccleuch

ELIZABETH VERNON

EDINBURGH OF LEARNING
CENTRAL
PUBLIC LIBRARIES

a loveless marriage with Lord Rich, whilst Dorothy soon found that the Earl of Northumberland proved quite as unsatisfactory a husband, as Lady Bridget Manners and Lady Elizabeth Vere had anticipated he would.

"Lettice Knollys's" son was chief favourite; her sister, Lady Leighton, and both her daughters were of the inner Court circle, and her brother, Sir William Knollys, Comptroller of the household, yet the Countess of Leicester herself remained in disgrace. The Earl of Essex, deeply resenting this slight on his mother, determined to use all his influence to bring about a reconciliation with the Queen, so that Lady Leicester might return to Court and take her rightful place in London society.

Lettice, hungering for sight of her boy, and heartily weary of Staffordshire, promised she would face the

"foul travelling, if matters stood so well as you might hope to obtain some favour for us, then I would come also presently up; otherwise a country life is fittest for disgraced persons. But, if you find reason to wish my coming, then must you presently send some coach horses to fetch me, for my own will never be able to draw me out of the mire. I pray you ask my sister Warwick's[1] counsel, and my sister Layton's, in this case, and let me hear accordingly from you by this bearer. So wishing you as to my own heart, my dear son, I ever rest your mother infinitely loving you.

L. Leicester."

[1] The term sister was constantly used to denote intimacy. Ann Russell and Lettice Knollys had been Maids of Honour together and remained close friends.

Essex replied that he had great hopes of being able to induce the Queen to receive his mother, so Lettice, with all the horses she could muster, braved mud, floods and highwaymen, in order to arrive at London early in January.

Her children and friends gave her a warm welcome, and many gatherings were held at Essex's house in the Strand. One festive evening, after "a very great supper," the guests were entertained by two plays, "which kept them up till one o'clock after midnight."

Elizabeth, knowing that Lady Leicester had arrived, took every precaution to avoid meeting her. Essex obtained permission to bring his mother to the privy galleries, but there she waited long in vain, the Queen obstinately refusing to pass that way till the Countess had left. Next her brother, Sir William Knollys, and his wife, "old lady Chandos," prepared a banquet at the Tilt End to which the Queen promised to come. All was in readiness; Lady Leicester waiting with a jewel worth £300 as a peace offering, when word came to say that Elizabeth "upon a sudden resolved not to go."

Essex used persuasion and entreaties varied by fits of temper when he sulked and went to bed. At length by sheer importunity he brought about a meeting, when Lettice "kissed the Queen's hand and her breast, and did embrace her, and the Queen kissed her."

The reconciliation proved hollow, serving to remind Elizabeth of the past and its bitterness, so that when Lady Leicester requested permission to come to Court again it was refused, and "some wonted unkind words

given out of her."[1] Lettice, stung by the affront, at once ordered her coach, and without even waiting to bid her son good-bye started off for Staffordshire.

The next of Essex's relations to get into disgrace was his cousin, Elizabeth Vernon, for it suddenly came out that the Earl of Southampton, hearing she was in a grave situation, had paid a fleeting visit to England in order to make her his wife.

The Queen heard the news on Sunday, "whereat her patience was so much moved that she came not to chapel." She threatened all concerned with the Tower, commanded "the sweetest and best appointed lodging in the Fleet" to be prepared for the "new-coined Countess," and ordered the Earl to return immediately. "These are but the beginnings of evils, well may he hope for a merry day,"[2] commented courtiers discussing the latest sensation.

Sir Robert Cecil as secretary wrote unwillingly, but without alternative, to the Earl on behalf of his angry mistress:

"I am grived to use the style of a councillor to you, to whom I have ever rather wished to be the messenger of honour and favour by laying her Majesty's commands upon you; but I must now put this gall in my ink, that she knows that you came over very lately, and returned again very contemptuously; that you have also married one of her maids of honour, without her privty, for which with the circumstances informed against you, I find her grievously offended; and she commands me to charge you

[1] Collins' *Sydney Papers.*
[2] *Domestic State Papers*, 1598.

expressly (all excuses set apart) to repair hither to London, and adventure your arrival without coming to Court, until her pleasure be known."[1]

To Southampton the contents of this letter "were nothing welcome," and the report of the Queen's anger "most grievous" unto him. Returning to England, he went straight to his young wife, who, banished from Court and threatened with imprisonment, had taken refuge with the Earl and Countess of Essex. A family discussion resulted in Lord and Lady Southampton repairing to Court the following Sunday in the hope of obtaining a personal interview with the Queen. As usual, the Council chamber was thronged with people waiting to see Elizabeth as she passed through on her way to chapel.

"First went the gentlemen, barons, earls, knights of the garter, all richly dressed and bare headed; next came the Chancellor, bearing the seals in a red silk purse, between two, one of which carried a royal sceptre, the other the sword of state, in a red scabbard, studded with golden fleur-de-lis, the point upwards. Next came the Queen, in the sixty fifth year of her age, as we were told, very majestic; her face oblong, fair, but wrinkled; her eyes small, yet black and pleasant, her nose a little hooked; her lips narrow and her teeth black; (a defect the English seem subject to, from their too great use of sugar). She had in her ears two pearls, with very rich drops; she wore false hair, and that red; upon her head she had a small crown, reported to be made of some of the gold of the celebrated Lunebourg table; her bosom was uncovered, as all the English ladies have it, till they marry; she had on a neck-

[1] *Domestic State Papers*, 1598.

lace of exceeding fine jewels. Her hands were small, her fingers long, and her stature neither tall nor low; her air was stately, her manner of speaking mild and obliging. That day she was dressed in white silk bordered with pearls of the size of beans and over it a mantle of black silk, shot with silver thread. Her train was very long, the end of it borne by marchioness. Instead of a chain, she had an oblong collar, of gold and jewels. As she went along in all this state and magnificence, she spoke very graciously, first to one, then to another, whether foreign ministers or those who attended for different reasons, in English, French, and Italian; for besides being well skilled in Greek, Latin, and the languages I have mentioned, she is mistress of Spanish, Scotch and Dutch. Whoever speaks to her, it is kneeling; now and then she raises some by her hand. While we were there, W. Slawata, a Bohemian baron, had letters to present to her; and she, after pulling off her glove, gave him her right hand to kiss, sparkling with rings and jewils,—a mark of particular favour. Wherever she turned her face as she was going along, everybody fell down on their knees. The ladies of the Court followed next to her, very handsome and well shaped, and for the most part dressed in white. She was guarded on each side, by the gentlemen pensioners, fifty in number, with gilt battle-axes."[1]

Slowly and majestically Elizabeth passed along, but never by look or sign did she vouchsafe the slightest recognition of the Earl and Countess of Southampton, who strove so earnestly to attract her attention. For two hours did they wait, then, greatly daring, the former Maid of Honour sent a message by Lady Scudamore "that she desired her Majesty's resolution."

[1] Hentzner's *Travels*.

Lady Scudamore, who as Mary Shelton had suffered blows and evil words consequent on her own secret marriage so long ago, ventured to plead for the young people. Elizabeth angrily bade her be silent, and tell my Lady Southampton "that she was sufficiently resolved but that next day she would have a talk with her father."[1]

The conference with Sir John Vernon ended in his taking his daughter home in disgrace to Hodnet, whilst to inhospitable lodging in the Fleet prison went her "ill good man."[2]

[1] Birch's *Memoirs of Queen Elizabeth.*

[2] The Earl of Southampton died in 1624, but "Elizabeth Vernon" was still living in 1647 when Charles I, "knowing her to be a lady of the honour and spirit, that she was superior to all kind of temptation," took refuge with her at Tichfield after his escape from Carisbrooke Castle.

CHAPTER XXV

THE Earl of Essex championed the cause of his cousin and friend with more zeal than discretion, doing them no good and himself considerable harm. The Queen lived in a state of perpetual friction with her young favourite, who possessed none of the sauve manners and controlled feelings which had rendered his stepfather, the Earl of Leicester, such an accomplished courtier. Essex, headstrong and impetuous, showed quite as much resentment to the Queen as he would have done to anyone else who opposed him. Completely sure of his power, he treated her with careless indifference, withholding the tokens of affections for which she craved, whilst lavishing them freely on the younger ladies. Elizabeth in consequence suffered tortures of jealousy; she loved so much, gave so much, yet received nothing in return. Scenes between them were of frequent occurrence, for Essex, fretted and irritated by the restraints her fondness put upon him, took ready offence. When he could not get his way, he sulked and went to bed, sure that anxiety for his health would soon cause the Queen to give way. Once the tussle between their wills lasted a fortnight, to the great interest of the Court.

"Full fourteen days his lordship kept in; Her Majesty, as I heard, meant to break him of his will, and to pull down his great heart, but found it a thing impossible, and says he holds it from his mother's side."[1]

[1] R. Whyte to Sir R. Sidney.

The Queen's forbearance did, however, give way during a discussion relative to the appointment of a Lord Lieutenant for Ireland. Elizabeth wished Sir William Knollys to go, but Essex suggested Sir George Carew, not from any mislikings of his uncle, but because he had quarrelled with Sir George and wanted to get him out of England.

Things then grew heated, for Elizabeth still adhered to Sir William Knollys, till Essex in a temper deliberately turned his back on her. Favourite or no favourite, this was more than Tudor blood could stand and she dealt my lord a swinging box on the ear, at the same time bidding him "go and be hanged."

Essex, livid with fury, swung round, clapping his hand on his sword and declaring "he would not have taken that blow from King Henry VIII, her father, and that it was an indignity that he neither could nor would endure from anyone."[1] He even seemed as if he would strike the Queen, and the Earl of Nottingham, in alarm, placed himself before her. Essex rammed back his sword, muttered something unintelligible, but obviously impolite, about "a King in petticoats," and flung himself out of the room.

No other man might have acted thus and retained either the Queen's favour or his own head, but Elizabeth's love forgave much, so that the favourite could if he would have made his peace. The trouble was that Essex, considering himself the aggrieved party, would do nothing of the sort. "I have received a wrong and I feel it," he said to those who wisely counselled, and refused to go near Court or ask the Queen's pardon.

[1] Camden.

An imperfect account of what had happened reached Lady Leicester in the country; anxious and alarmed, she wrote to her son:

"Sweet Robin,

Yourself hath given me such taste of some strange matter to be looked for, so I cannot be quiet, till I know the true cause of your absence and discontentment. If it be but for Ireland, I doubt not, but you are wise and politic enough to countermine with your enemies, whose devilish practises can no way hurt you but one. Wherefore, my dear son, give me leave to be a little jealous over you for your good, and intreat you to have ever God and your own honour before your eyes; so shall you be sure, that he will dispose indeed all, as you say, for the best, in spite of all enemies. My friend[1] and I cannot but be troubled with this news, and do wish ourselves with you, as we would soon be, if we thought our service needful, or that you would have it so; which let us know, and we will leave all the occasions whatsoever, and will presently be with you. Well, if it be men's matters I know you have courage enough; if women's, you have meetly well passed the pikes already, and therein should be skilful. So praying you not to be too secret from your best friends, I end, beseeching the Almighty to bless you ever in his highest favour, while I am,

Your mother,
dearliest loving you,
L. LEICESTER."[2]

Elizabeth, heart-sore and wretched from this quarrel with the one being she loved, suffered another sorrow in the loss of Lord Burleigh. During his last illness she visited

[1] Her husband, Christopher Blount.
[2] Birch's *Memoirs of Queen Elizabeth.*

him constantly, often feeding him with her own hands, as with tear-dimmed eyes she watched him nearing the end.

Burleigh died on August 4th, 1598, and Sir William Knollys made the sad event occasion to write a letter of admonition to his nephew:

"Her Majesty hath been this afternoon made privy by Mr. Chancellor (Sir John Fortescue) of my Lord Treasurer's death, which she seemeth to take very grievously, shedding of tears, and separating herself from all company. Yet I doubt not but she in her wisdom will cast this behind her, as she hath done many other before time of like nature. . . . Remember, I beseech you, that there is no contesting between sovereignty and obedience; and I fear the longer your lordship doth persist in this careless humour of Her Majesty, the more her heart will be hardened: and I pray God your contending with her in this manner do not breed such a hatred in her, as will never be reclaimed."[1]

Eventually the quarrel was made up as others had been before, so tenaciously did Elizabeth cling to the one being whose life she held more than her own. The scales were falling from her eyes, for she could no longer delude herself with the thought that he loved her with a love equalling her own; yet she could not wholly give him up, try as she would. With tears in her eyes she entreated him not to try her too far, lest as a Queen she might be unable to pardon where as a woman love might urge her to do. At the same time, she drew a ring from her finger, giving it to Essex with the promise that, however dire his offence, if

[1] Birch's *Memoirs of Queen Elizabeth.*

he sent it to her as token of his repentance and complete submission, she would grant him pardon.

Even after his return to Court, Essex still continued to negative all suggestions for the Irish Lieutenancy, till at length Elizabeth said he had better take it himself, as Tyrone's rebellion in the North rendered it imperative that some one should go over and endeavour to restore order.

The appointment once made, Essex showed no great desire to be gone; the young courtiers, on the contrary, were wild with enthusiasm to join the expedition. Tilts and tourneys were all very well, but they burned to win their spurs on the field of battle. Knighthood bestowed in times of peace was well enough for mayors or citizens: "carpet knights" who knelt smugly before the Queen to receive the accolade, but young bloods scoffed derisively at "A knight dubb'd with unhack'd rapier, and on carpet considerations."[1]

To win distinction in battle by signal act of valour; mired, wounded, with dripping sword, to be called before the general in command and by him knighted, thus dreamed the gallants. So many wished to go that it seemed doubtful if there would be enough companies for them to command, till the Queen thinned out the aspirants and caused much heart-burning by forbidding any of the gentlemen pensioners or those holding office at Court go at all.

Still a goodly troupe set out to Ireland soon after attending a grand ball, when the Queen "very richly and

[1] *Twelfth Night*, III, 4.

freshly attired," danced with the Earl of Essex. The Maids of Honour missed their admirers, and Margaret Ratcliffe sorrowed over the departure of her beloved brother, Alexander Ratcliffe. Moreover, she was beginning to feel the strain of a long love affair, for so far neither she nor Lady Kildare had contrived permanently to ensnare Lord Cobham's affection. When Lord Cobham sprained his foot, and was "not for the pains able to come abroad," the two ladies were disconsolate. Lady Kildare, the Queen's carver, hearing that Sir Walter Raleigh had been to see the sufferer, sent urgent message to him to come and report to her before dinner, "else the well carving of the Queen's meat would be mar'd for that day."

News from Ireland proved anything but satisfactory, and Essex aroused the Queen's anger by making the Earl of Southampton Master of the Horse, in direct contravention of her command that if released from prison to join the army he should not be given any post of importance.

Essex when reprimanded refused to revoke the appointment, writing to the Lords of the Council: "Was it treason in My Lord of Southampton to marry my poor kinswoman, that neither long imprisonment nor any punishment besides that hath been usual in like cases, can satisfy or appease; or will no kind of punishment be fit for him, but that which punisheth not him but me, this army, and poor country of Ireland."

Another offence, which greatly exasperated the Queen, was the prodigality with which Essex bestowed the honour of knighthood. Not content with dubbing them by dozens,

he proceeded "to huddle them up by half hundreds." At Court it was "much marvelled that this humour should so possess him,"[1] especially as no definite account of valorous deeds corresponded with the bestowal of the honour. Indeed, things were going far from well, and in August the army suffered a defeat with heavy losses. When the death roll reached Court it contained the name of Sir Alexander Ratcliffe.

The Queen herself broke the sad news to Margaret, who when she realized the immensity of her loss cried as though her heart would break. Leaving the Queen's presence she ran blindly upstairs to the girls' dormitory, and throwing herself on her bed refused to be comforted. Everything that mattered in Margaret's life had gone: her dearly loved brother was dead, and Lord Cobham did not care for her.

Elizabeth, hearing from the other Maids of Honour that their friend's grief seemed rather to increase than lessen, came to see her, but even she could not hearten Margaret Ratcliffe. The Palace doctors called in found nothing radically wrong with their patient, reporting it to be illness, not of the body but the heart. Listlessly she lay in bed, refusing food and growing daily whiter and thinner, so that when the Court moved to Nonsuch she had to be left behind at Richmond.

Scarcely had the Court settled down at Nonsuch when an unexpected event occurred. Early on the morning of Michaelmas Eve, the Earl of Essex, travel-stained and mire-bespattered, arrived at the Palace gate. Straight to

[1] *Letters of John Chamberlain.*

the presence chamber he went, but, not finding the Queen there, astonished onlookers beheld him enter unannounced her bedchamber. Elizabeth, whose toilet held many secrets, was in the hands of her tirewomen, and by no means ready to receive male admirers. Yet she could not entirely dissemble the joy she felt at beholding the one being always in her thoughts.

Essex, satisfied with his reception, returned through the outer chambers "very pleasant and thanked God, though he had suffered much trouble and storms abroad, he found a sweet calm at home."[1] The favourite, however, had underrated the power of his enemies, who, headed by Sir Robert Cecil and Raleigh, next had the Queen's ear to such good purpose that when Essex visited her again in the evening he found her much changed, "for she began to call him in question for his coming away, and leaving all things at so great hazard."

The upshot was that my Lord of Essex, to his surprise and chagrin, received orders to give reasons to the council for:

"His contemptuous disobedience of her Majesty's letters and will in returning: his presumptuous letters written from time to time: his proceedings in Ireland contrary to the points resolved upon in England, ere he went: his rash manner of coming away from Ireland: his overbold going the day before to her Majesty's presence to her bedchamber: and his making so many idle Knights."[2]

The idle knights began to flock back to town, not seeing much profit in remaining with the army after the general's

[1] Collins' *Sydney Papers*. [2] *Ibid.*

departure. They did not find their reception entirely pleasing, as the gilded spurs of knighthood of which they were so proud had now become the jest of the town. Further, there was a horrible report that the Queen "was very vehement" to degrade my Lord of Essex's Irish Knights, which if carried into effect would have entailed the humiliation of having their gilt spurs hacked off by a cook's chopper.

"Sir John" Harrington had not been home an hour before he was threatened with the Fleet; subsequently he had a very painful interview with his royal godmother: "What, did the fool bring you too? Go back to your business," she exclaimed, frowning angrily at "boy Jack," humbly kneeling on his quaking knees. Exculpate himself he could not, "for her choler did outrun all reason," and she swore they were "all idle knaves."

"She chafed much, walked fast to and fro, looked with discomposure in her visage; and I remember, she catched my girdle when I kneeled to her, and swore, 'By God's son I am no queen, that man is above me:—who gave him command to come here so soon? I did send him on other business! It was long before more gracious discourse did fall to my hearing; but I was then put out of my trouble, and bid go home. I did not stay to be bidden twice; if all the Irish rebels had been at my heels, I should not have made better speed, for I did now flee from one whom I both loved and feared too."[1]

Elizabeth, having received the Council's report of the Earl of Essex's examination, ordered him to be removed to

[1] Sir J. Harrington's *Nugæ Antiquæ*.

York House in charge of the Lord Keeper, there to remain during Her Majesty's pleasure. How long that would be no one knew, least of all the Queen, who had returned with the Court to Richmond.

Queen and ladies were alike shocked to see the change that had taken place in Margaret Ratcliffe during their absence. She had become but a shadow of her former self, and though pleased to see her friends again, their hold on her affection was not strong enough to give an incentive to life, and one November morning she slipped over the borderland to join her brother.

The nature of her death made a deep impression, not only at Court, but throughout the whole city of London; and after the arrest of the Earl of Essex it formed the chief topics of conversation:

"There is newes besides of the tragycall death of Mistress Ratcliffe the Mayde of honor, who ever synce the death of Sir Alexander her brother hathe pined in such strange manner, as voluntarily she hath gone about to starve herself, and by the two days together hathe receivyed no sustinence, which meeting with extreame greife hathe made an end of her Mayden modest days at Richmond uppon Saterdaye last, her Majestie being present, who commanded her body to be opened and found it all well and sound, saving certyne strings striped all over her harte."[1]

The Maids of Honour went into mourning for their friend and followed in the funeral procession, Ann Russell being chief mourner. Margaret was buried in

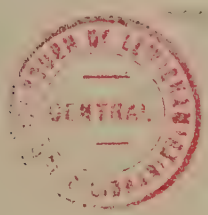
[1] Philip Gaudy's *Letters*.

St. Margaret's, Westminster, Ben Jonson composing her epitaph.

On Margaret Ratcliffe

"Marble weep, for thou do'st cover,
A dead beautie underneath thee,
Rich as nature could bequeath thee:
Grant then, no rude hand remove her.
All the gazers on the skies
Read not in faire Heaven's storie,
Expresses truth or truer glorie,
Than they might in her bright eyes.

Rare as wonder was her wit;
And like nectar ever flowing:
Till time, strong by her bestowing,
Conquer'd hath both life and it.
Life whose griefe was out of fashion
In these times; few so ru'd
Fate in a brother. To conclude
For wit, features, and true passion,
Earth, thou hast not such another."



CHAPTER XXVI

IN Margaret Ratcliffe's place came "the young fair Mrs. Southwell,"[1] Elizabeth's namesake and god-daughter, whose mother, Lady Southwell, and grandmother, Lady Nottingham, now ladies of the bed-chamber, had been Maids of Honour before her.

At Court the Howard influence had never been stronger, for since Lord Burleigh's death the Queen relied more and more upon the advice of the Lord Admiral. Both he and his wife, "Kate Carey," Elizabeth's dearest friend, were against the return of the Earl of Essex to Court. Apart from party feeling, they realized the unhappiness he had caused the Queen, and dreaded his influence over the declining years of her life.

Lady Nottingham's sister, Lady Scrope, on the contrary, did all she could to soften the Queen's heart towards the disgraced favourite. "She endures much at her Majesty's hands, because she doth daily do all the kind offices of love to the Queen in his behalf. She wears all black, she mourns and is pensive, and joys in nothing but in a solitary being along. And 'tis thought, she says much that few would venture to say but herself."[2]

Mary Radcliffe added her entreaties to those of Lady Scrope, and Lady Warwick, his mother's friend, sent

[1] Elizabeth, d. of Sir Robert Southwell, and his wife, Elizabeth Howard, d. of the Earl of Nottingham. In the next reign Elizabeth Southwell created a sensation, when, disguised as a page, she eloped with Lord Robert Dudley to the Continent.

[2] R. Whyte to Sir R. Sidney.

Essex a message saying that if he obtained his liberty and came to Greenwich she would contrive an opportunity to let him into the palace gardens one day when the Queen happened to be in a good humour, so that he might plead his cause in person.

The Earl's relatives and friends, filled with anxiety, knew not what to do for the best. It was taken ill that Lady Essex "a most sorrowful creature for her husband's captivity," came to Court, though "all in black of the meanest price" to show her humility. Lady Rich and Lady Southampton went into the country "to shun the company that daily were wont to visit them in town, because it gave offence to the Court." Even the Earl's servants were afraid "to meet in any place to make merry, lest it might be ill taken."

Essex fell dangerously ill, to the concern of the Queen, who though she still refused forgiveness sent eight of her physicians to examine him. Their report left Her Majesty "very pensive and grieved." Disillusioned and sore at heart, yet she could not entirely root out her love, and there were tears in her eyes when she sent the prisoner some broth, together with a message "that he should comfort himself, and that she would, if she might with her honor, visit him."

Lady Essex at length received permission to see her husband, and Lady Rich and Lady Northumberland came to Court as suppliants for their brother's liberty. Penelope, putting more faith in material things than solicitations, sent the Queen many jewels and presents, which were accepted, but the accompanying request to

visit her brother refused. As a matter of fact Elizabeth was by no means pleased with Penelope, having more than a suspicion that the lady's sparkling black eyes had managed to ensnare the affections of her other young favourite, Lord Mountjoy.

Lady Leicester, tortured with anxiety, and hearing that her daughters were powerless to move the Queen, determined to come to town in the very faint hope she might be able to help her boy. That Elizabeth bore her no goodwill she very well knew, but as the New Year's gift she sent "was very well taken," she put in hand a gown which would cost £100 at least. On March 2nd the ladies caught a glimpse of this wonderful dress.

"Yesterday the Countess of Leicester sent the Queen a most curious fine gown, which was presented by my Lady Scudamore. Her Majesty liked it well, but did not accept it, nor refuse it; only answered, 'that things standing as they did, it was not fit for her to desire what she did; which was, to come to her Majesty's presence to kiss her hands, upon her now going to her poor home."[1]

One day of hope the ladies had, when Lady Leicester, her two daughters and their cousin, Lady Southampton, assembled at Essex House in anticipation that the Earl would be released. This expectation was not fulfilled, and the ladies got into trouble because they went to a house overlooking York Garden, in order to wave to the Earl as he walked up and down, "in a cloth gown, cloth jerkin, cloth house, cloth stockings, cloth mittens."

When Essex did receive permission to return to his

[1] Collins' *Sydney Papers*.

own house it was in custody of Sir Richard Berkley, all the ladies being sent away before his arrival. Eventually after an examination of his conduct, Essex received his freedom from the Queen, coupled with the proviso that "he must in no sort suppose himself to be freed from her indignation neither must he presume to approach her court or person."

Elizabeth, meanwhile, was determined to show that she could do perfectly well without the Earl of Essex, and his enemies, falling in with her humour, did all they could to provide a ceaseless round of amusements: bull baiting, bear baiting, hunting during the day, and at night dancing, plays, conjuring, or acrobatic performances.

As an additional distraction the Queen not only gave assent, but evinced the deepest interest in Ann Russell's forthcoming wedding.

The two Russell girls had spent five happy years at Court, away from the restraints imposed upon them by their litigious mother, Lady Russell.[1] She, with her two sisters, Lady Burleigh and Lady Bacon, were the most famous blue stockings[2] of their day, and possessed of tongues as shrewd as their wits. Lady Russell's children had perforce to imbibe learning whether they would or

[1] Daughter of Sir Anthony Cook, of Gidea Hall, Essex.

[2] The term "blue stocking" seems to have originated in a Society founded at Venice in 1500. The members of this society were distinguished by their blue stockings. In the reign of Elizabeth the term as applied to a "learned lady" was in common use both in England and on the Continent. The Spanish Ambassador, in a letter dated December 29th, 1558, refers to Lady Burleigh as a "tiresome blue stocking" (*Calendar Span. State Papers*, 3).

no, and the two small girls mastered the rudiments of the three R's to accompaniment of tears and chastisement.

John, Lord Russell, would if he had lived have been Earl of Bedford, but dying before his father the title passed to his nephew, a minor under the wardship of Lady Warwick. The two girls, Elizabeth and Ann, were left slenderly provided for under their grandfather's will, and their mother made suit to have them taken into the Queen's household. When this came to pass she wrote one of the acrid letters with which she frequently favoured her nephew, Sir Robert Cecil:

"I have been to see her Majesty when going to God's house, not being able through malice to see her face else; there was no lady present more than ordinary, but Lady Buckhurst. I think her Majesty would expect from me a New Year's Gift, because of her favour in accepting my daughter's services. I propose to give £20 in a purse. I have many enemies and can only serve her Majesty by prayers. I am maliced thus through your father's mutterings which stick fast by me, and yet he considers it not nor knows what I have endured for him to my undeserved shame. By your Aunt that hath not £600 de Claro in the world to live on left; Elizabeth Russell, that liveth in scorn and disdain, malice, and rancour, fearing, serving and depending only upon God and my sovereign."[1]

Once settled at Court the two girls did not see much of their mother, who immersed in quarrels with neighbours, tradespeople, and theatre proprietors, constantly sent word that she was too busy with lawyers to have them visit her. Before long she came into collision with her

[1] *Domestic State Papers*, 1575.

daughters, when on the advice of their uncle, Sir Robert Cecil, they decided to sell their property, Russell House in St. Martin-in-the-Fields.

Lady Russell requested her daughters to come to her at once and, in a good deal of trepidation, the two girls took boat at Whitehall stairs and were rowed up to their mother's house at Blackfriars. Lady Russell met them with bitter reproaches, declaring that "whensoever they weeded out their father's name at Russell house they should root out her heart from them."[1]

Ann bent under the storm, beginning to cry, and promising not to do anything against her mother's wishes, but Elizabeth, having inherited a good deal of the elder lady's character, held out. She and Ann could never afford to live in Russell House; Sir Robert Cecil advised the sale, and undoubtedly the best thing to do was to sell it now when they had a good offer. Lady Russell scolded and upbraided in vain. Bess remained firm, secure in the knowledge that her mother dared not oppose Sir Robert Cecil, though she might write in bitterness, "God reward Mistress Elizabeth. Much good shall she get by her presumptuous disobedience."

Lady Russell's interference made it difficult for her daughters to keep their friends. When Lord Cobham began to pay so much attention to Bess that both Margaret Ratcliffe and Lady Kildare were seriously perturbed, Lady Russell threatened him with legal proceedings on account of some property, and all question of marriage came to an end. Then again when Bess became a special

[1] Salisbury MSS., Hist. MSS. Com.

favourite of the Lord Admiral, Lady Russell, who happened to be in competition with him for a lease of some lands, promptly took the opportunity to urge her claim in the name of her daughter:

"Good Mr. Secretary, move her Majesty to grant my lease promised to your father in his days, to me now for Bess Russell's good. It cost me truly twelve years since, a gown and pettitcoat of such tissue as should have been for the Queen of Scots' wedding garment; but I got them for my Queen, full dearly bought, I well wot. Besides I gave her Majesty a canopy of tissue with curtains of crimson taffety belted gold. I gave also two hats with two jewels, though I say it, fine hats; the one white beaver, the jewel of the one above a hundred pounds price, besides the pendant pearl, which cost me the £30 more. And then it pleased her Majesty to acknowledge the jewel to be so fair as that she commanded it should be delivered to me again, but it was not; and after by my Lady Cobham, your mother-in-law, when she presented my new years gift of £30 in fair gold, I received answer that her Majesty would grant my lease of Dunnington. Sir, I will be sworn that in the space of 18 weeks, gifts to her Majesty cost me above £500, in hope to have Dunnington lease; which if now you will get performed for Bess's almost six years service; she I am sure will be most ready to acquit any service to yourself."[1]

Elizabeth and Ann, like most of the Maids of Honour, were fine horsewomen and spent a great deal of time in the saddle. The Queen's horses were kept at Charing Cross Mews which, owing to proximity to the Palace, proved more convenient than the old royal stables at

[1] Salisbury MSS.

Holborn. These had been burnt down by fire in the reign of Henry VIII, when it became imperative to find immediate lodging for all the King's horses, and all the King's men in attendance on them. Choice fell on the Royal Mews at Charing Cross, where the King's falcons were shut up to mew or moult, and when the temporary stables became permanent, they retained their old name of the Mews.

Each Maid of Honour had her own horse; Bess Russell rode "Rhone Howard"; Ann Russell, "Bay Dormer"; Mary Fitton,[1] "Grey Fitton"; Ann Carey,[2] "White Smythfield"; Cordall Onslow, "White Howard"; whilst Elizabeth Southwell succeeded to "Bay Compton," Margaret Ratcliffe's mount.

Ann Russell, though she grieved over Margaret's loss, had plenty to occupy her mind in connection with her approaching marriage to Lord Herbert.[3] The Queen, whose own unhappiness rendered her more sympathetic than usual to love affairs, not only gave gracious permission, but promised to honour the ceremony with her presence. This, though gratifying, very considerably complicated matters, for it meant that the Queen must fix the wedding-day.

Relatives and friends came up to town in anticipation of the event; still Elizabeth gave no sign, till at length Lady Russell, who feared no one and possessed only a very limited stock of patience, determined to go over to

[1] Mary Fitton, d. of Sir E. Fitton, of Gawsworth.
[2] Ann Carey, d. of Sir E. Carey, and "Katherine Knevett."
[3] Son of Ed., 4th Earl of Worcester and Lady Elizabeth Hastings.

Greenwich with all the wedding guests to fetch her daughter. To the surprise of every one she succeeded:

"Mistresse Ann Russell went from court upon Monday last with 18 coaches, the like hath not been seen amongst the Maydes. The Queen in public used of her as gracious speeches as have been heard of any, and commanded all the Maydes to accompany her to London; so did all the Lords of the Court. Her mother brought a great number of strangers to Court; all went in a troup away."[1]

So great was the company expected for the wedding, that it seemed doubtful if Lady Russell's house at Blackfriars would be large enough to hold them all. Under the circumstances she judged it advisable to bury the hatchet with her neighbour, Lord Cobham, and his newly wedded wife, Lady Kildare, that they might accommodate the Queen, and lend a number of liveried servants to wait at the wedding banquet.

A perfect June morning dawned for Ann's wedding-day, and soon after sunrise Lady Russell's household was astir in readiness for the great event. A watcher stationed at the watergate stairs gave warning as the Queen's barge came in sight, so that when Her Majesty alighted the bride and her relatives were waiting in readiness at the landing-stage. Elizabeth spoke very graciously to Mistress Ann; then, taking her seat in an elaborately ornamented litter provided by Lord Cobham, she was carried up to the house on the shoulders of six knights.

Ann wore a white wedding dress, covered with wedding favours in different coloured ribbons tied in true lover's

[1] Rowland Whyte to Sir R. Sidney.

Coll. of the Duke of Beaufort *Photo Walpole Society*

ANN RUSSELL, LADY HERBERT

DENTAL

knots, and loosely stitched on to the gown. As with all brides she held her hair loose, crowned by a chaplet of white flowers.

Music sounding beneath the windows signalled the arrival of Lord Herbert[1] and Lord Cobham, who had come to conduct "Mistress Bride" to church, Bess Russell and the other bridesmaids going to meet the bridegroom and offering him sprigs of gilded rosemary.[2]

Scarcely had the clergyman concluded the wedding service when the young men and maids left their seats in the church, to make usual onslaught on the newly married couple's "favours."

> "Quickly, quickly then prepare;
> And let the young men, and the Brides maids share
> Your garters; and their joynts
> Encircle with the Bride-grooms points."[3]

Older people, drinking the bride's health from the big mazer bowl filled with muscadel, laughed at the scrimmage which despoiled Ann of her garters and favours, for the ornamentation of the hats and sleeves of her youthful friends.

The Earls of Rutland and Cumberland escorted the new Lady Herbert back to her mother's house, the guests following in long procession along the freshly sanded streets. Neighbours had decorated their houses, and during

[1] William, son of the Earl of Pembroke and Mary Sidney.

[2] "My wooing's ended; now my wedding's near,
When gloves are given, gilded be you there."

[3] Herrick's *Hesperides*.

the bride's absence at church Lady Russell's servants festooned the porch with wreaths of summer flowers.

The guests walked in the pleasant garden listening to music, or looked at the wedding presents, chiefly in jewellery and plate, to the value of £1000, displayed in one of the rooms. At five o'clock they sat down to a grand banquet, "the entertainment was great and plentiful and my Lady Russell much commended for it."

After the feast came a masque performed by the Maids of Honour. The girls had invented a new dance especially for the occasion, and "each had a shirt of cloth of silver, a rich waistcoat wrought with silkes and gold and silver, a mantell of carnation taffeta cast under the arme, and their hair loose about their shoulders curiously knotted and interlaced." Into the hall they came led by Mary Fitton, "and delicate it was to see eight ladies so pretty and richly attired."[1]

The masque ended in great applause from the onlookers, when vivacious Mary Fitton, approaching the Queen, entreated that she would come and join in the dancing.

"Who art thou?" inquired Elizabeth.

"Affection," replied Mary Fitton, and the word stung the Queen to the quick.

"Affection! Affection is false," quoth she bitterly. "Yet her Majestie rose and dawnced."[1]

Ann had scarcely time to grow accustomed to the dignity of a married woman, when a terrible grief overwhelmed her in the loss of her only sister. Bess, who

[1] Collins' *Sydney Papers*.

danced so gaily at the wedding, fell dangerously ill soon after the Court returned to Greenwich. From the first there seemed little hope of recovery, though night and day Lady Warwick nursed her niece with ceaseless devotion. On the first of July, less than three weeks after Ann's wedding, Bess lay dead, transforming the gaily decked home at Blackfriars to a sable-hung house of mourning.

> "All things that we ordained festival
> Turn from their office to black funeral;
> Our instruments to melancholy bells,
> Our wedding cheer to a sad burial feast."[1]

Elizabeth Russell was buried in St. Edmund's Chapel, Westminster Abbey, beside Lady Jane Seymour, another Maid of Honour who had died in untimely youth forty years before. An alabaster figure of the dead girl, seated in a chair, was fashioned at Lady Herbert's desire, and placed in the chapel as a memorial by her sorrowing sister Ann.

[1] *Romeo and Juliet*, IV, 5.

CHAPTER XXVII

MARY FITTON, who led the masque at Ann Russell's wedding, was the younger daughter of Sir Edward Fitton, of Gawsworth in Cheshire, and his wife Alice Holecroft, a sister of Isabel Holecroft—now the widowed Countess of Rutland. Mary's elder sister Ann was married to John Newdegate of Arbury, and lived a quiet country life. But quiet and the country by no means appealed to Mary, who, greatly delighted, was appointed one of the Queen's Maids of Honour.

Sir Edward Fitton, anxious that his seventeen-year-old daughter should have some one to whom she could go for advice, wrote to his old friend, Sir William Knollys, Comptroller to the Royal household, asking if he would keep an eye on Mary when she came to Court.

Sir William Knollys readily promised that he would "in no wise ffayle to ffulfill your desyre in playing the good sheppard and will to my power deffend the innocent lamb from the wolvyshe cruelltye and fox-like subtelltye of the tame beasts of thys place, which when they seme to take bread at a man's hand will byte beffore they bark; all thyr songs be syrenlike, and theyr kisses after Judas' ffasshion, but ffrom such beasts delyver me and my frends. I will with my councill advyse your ffayre daughter, with my true affection love hyr and with my sword deffend hyr yff need be, hir innocency will deserve yt and hyr vertue will chaleng yt at my hands, and I will be as carefull off her weldoing as yff I wear hyr true ffather."[1]

[1] *Gossip from a Muniment Room*, Lady Newdigate-Newdegate.

So far as intention went, Sir William was all that could be desired, and Mary may have been an innocent little country girl when she first arrived at Court. Unfortunately, neither Mary's innocence nor Sir William Knollys' fatherly interest lasted long. The new Maid of Honour, a clever, vivacious girl, very soon had a circle of admirers, chief among them being Sir William Knollys. The Comptroller might be over fifty, have a wife already, but neither of these considerations prevented him laying his sophisticated heart at Mary Fitton's feet.

The girl led her elderly admirer a sorry time of it; sometimes she behaved nicely, transporting Sir William to the heights of bliss; at others she smiled sweetly upon more youthful gallants, thereby rendering the world a dour place for Her Majesty's Comptroller. When he had toothache and felt very sorry for himself, Mary evinced no sympathy with his sufferings, and went off to bed without even bidding him good night.

Sir William, left alone with a swollen face and injured feelings, found relief in writing to Ann Newdegate, not scrupling to hint of his impatience that his wife, "old lady Chandos," might speedily depart to a better world and so set him free.

"My hopes are myxt with dispayre and my desyres starved with expectations, but wear my enjoying assured, I could willinglye endure purgatorye ffor a season to purchase my heaven at last. But the short warning, the distemperature off my head by reason off the toothake and your systers going to bed without bydding me godnight will joyne in one to be a means that for this tyme I will onlye troble you with these ffew lynes skribbled in hast,

and wishing you all happynes a good delyverye off your burden, and your syster in the same case justiffyable, I leave you to God's good protectyon, myself to your dearest systers true love and hyr to a constant resolution to love hym onlye who cannot but ever love hyr best and thus with my best salutations I will ever remayne,

Your most assured ffrend,
I would fayne saye brother,
W. KNOLLYS."[1]

Ann Newdegate asked the love-lorn Comptroller to stand gossip to her first child. Though unable by reason of Court duties to be present at the ceremony, Sir William deputed his brother-in-law, Sir Christopher Blount, "to supplye my place in makyng your lytle one a christian soule and gyve yt what name yt shall pleasure you. I magyne what name I love best and that I nominate but reffer the choyse to yourselff."

Ann Newdegate had not much difficulty in guessing the name which sounded sweet in Sir William's ears, and his little god-daughter received the name of Mary.

Mary Fitton was a bad letter writer, so that, if it had not been for Sir William Knollys's active correspondence with Ann, the family at home would have heard little of her. Even when she did take out her standish and sand-box, Mary's long quill proved by no means the pen of a ready writer.

"To my dearest syster Mrs An Newdegate.

"Since distance bares me from so gret hapenes as I can seldom hear from you which when I do is welcome, as I

[1] *Gossip from a Muniment Room*, Lady Newdigate-Newdegate.

esteem nothing more worthie and for your love which I dout not shal be equeled in ful mesuer, but lest my lines to tedius wear and time that limites all things bare me of words which else would never ses to tel howe dear you ar, and with what sele I desire your retoune, than can wish nothing then your harte's desir and wil ever continow your afectionet sister. MARY PHYTTON."[1]

Mary entered with zest into every gaiety and soon became one of the best dancers at Court, whether at dignified measures, stately Pavanes, nimble galliards,[2] wild whirling heyes, the popular Trenchmore, or the Merry Volte, a new dance enthusiastically described by one of its votaries:

"Yet is there one the most delightful kind,
A lofty jumping or a leaping round,
Where arm in arm two dancers are entwin'd,
And whirl themselves with strict embracements bound.
And still their feet an anapest do sound,
An anapest is all their music's song,
Whose first two feet are short and third is long."[3]

Sir William Knollys did not approve of these new-fangled dances, looking glumly on when younger men claimed his "dearest dear" as partner. Very sorely did he fear he would never "be so happye as to possess the ffayre fflower of this summer's garden."

Jealousy of younger men, together with anxiety for his nephew, the Earl of Essex, preyed on the Comptroller's mind, so that Mary chid him for being melancholy, which

[1] *Gossip from a Muniment Room*, Lady Newdigate-Newdegate.
[2] Sir Toby Belch, "What is thy excellence in a galliard, knight?" Sir Andrew Aguecheek, "Faith, I can cut a caper."
[3] Sir John Davies, *Orchestra*, *Twelfth Night*, I, 3.

he resented as coming "ffrom hyr who when I am myself ys the onlye comffortt off my heart."

A rich New Year's gift, appearing "as it were in a cloud no man knew how," but every one guessed, remained for some time in the hands of Sir William Knollys, as the Queen would neither accept nor refuse it. In the end she ordered its return, and paid no attention to the impassioned letters which Essex sent, begging for an interview:

"If your Majesty will vouchsafe to let me once prostrate myself at your feet, and behold your fair and gracious eyes, though it be unknown to all the world but to him that your Majesty shall appoint to bring me to that paradise."

Elizabeth read the words with heartache; if she could have believed them she would have forgiven, but the bitterness of understanding revealed to her that, though she might command her young favourites' lip service, their hearts were elsewhere. She, who had always been first, could not brook half-hearted affection from those she loved. Rather than be last she would be nothing and cut them for ever out of her life, though by so doing she suffered soul-searing agony.

She might have turned for consolation to Lord Mountjoy, who had succeeded Essex as lord deputy in Ireland, but for the knowledge that

> "When nature made her chief work Stella's eyes,
> In colour black."

Nature had fashioned something for the ensnaring of men. Philip Sidney had thrilled at the sight of them; so,

too, did my Lord Mountjoy, as the Lord Admiral hinted when he wrote to him, "I think Her Majesty would be most glad to see and look upon your dark eyes here, so she were sure you would not look with too much respect on other black eyes."[1]

Essex and Mountjoy being out of Court, efforts were made to introduce new favourites who might captivate the Queen's fancy. Among these were Lord Herbert, Mary Sidney's eldest son, who had recently prevailed on his father to allow him to reside in London. The Queen showed him special favour for his mother's sake, as she explained to the Earl of Pembroke when the lad went home on a visit; "he shall be right welcome back to us again: but how much the more for her sake that bare him leave rather to herself to judge than to our pen to describe."[2]

A clever, personable young man, Lord Herbert exasperated the friends who wished him to supplant the disgraced Earl of Essex by his own indifference to the honour. Bitterly they reproached him for being a melancholy young man, and "too cold a courtier in a matter of such greatness." Though showing no inclination for a flirtation with a queenly virgin nearing seventy, my Lord Herbert was very ready to embark on such an enterprise with one of the Maids of Honour.

Mary Fitton met him more than half-way, for anything in the nature of excitement appealed to the highly strung girl. In the evenings, when shadowy dusk blurred outlines

[1] Printed in Devereux's *Lives of the Earls of Essex.*
[2] Pepys's MS., Hist. MSS. Com.

and the grey mists rolled up from the river, Mary would throw a long white cloak over her Court dress and, imitating a man's swagger, leave the brightly lit Palace to walk with her love in the gardens.

Sir William Knollys, ignorant of much, but suspecting more than was good for his peace of mind, feared that despite her age "old lady Chandos" would never make him a widower in time to marry Mary. As he told Ann Newdegate in mixed metaphors, "While the grasse groeth the horse maye starve; and she thinketh a byrd in the bush ys worth 2 in the hand."

Mary was imprudent, Lord Herbert inconstant, and the intrigue ended in scandal. Elizabeth, who prided herself on the chastity of her Court, threatened all and sundry with imprisonment. The Maids of Honour in particular came in for a bad time and general sympathy, on account "of the persecution (which) is like to befall the poor maids chamber in Court, and of Fytton's afflictions."[1]

Lord Herbert, who had recently succeeded his father as Earl of Pembroke, while admitting responsibility for Mary's condition, refused to marry her, and was committed to the Fleet prison in expiation of his offence.

Sir William Knollys, his faith in womenkind wholly shaken, could not tear Mary from his heart, so "sweete and pleasant" had been the "blossom" of his love, so "comffortable and cordiall" to his heart. Even though "the man off synne" (Pembroke) had done so ill, Sir William still hoped that if ever it did please the Almighty to remember

[1] Carew MSS.

the aged infirmities of "old lady Chandos,"[1] he might claim Mary[2] for his own. He assured Ann that "no earthlye creature ys Mistress off my love, nor ys like to be, as not willing to trust a woman w^th that w^ch was so truelye gyven and so unduelye rejected."

Sir Edward Fitton, hearing of his daughter's disgrace, hurried up to London and, eventually obtaining her "enlargement," carried Mary[3] away from her former triumphs and disgrace back to the old home in Cheshire.

[1] She died in 1605, and two months later Sir William Knollys (sixty-one) married Lady Elizabeth Howard (nineteen), daughter of Thomas, Earl of Suffolk. He was made Earl of Banbury in 1626, and died at the age of eighty-eight in 1632.

[2] Mary Fitton has been suggested as the "dark lady" of Shakespeare's Sonnets, the Earl of Pembroke being one of the candidates for "Mr.W.H."

[3] Mary, *circa* 1607, married William Polewheele, and, 2ndly, John Lougher. She died in 1647.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE close of the sixteenth century saw the end of that brilliant Court life which had been such a feature of the reign for over forty years. Gaiety of a sort there was still, for the Queen took an active part in all amusements, spurred on by a grim determination to prove her perennial youthfulness. Other women verging on seventy might show signs of physical infirmity, but not the peerless Elizabeth still admired and desired of all men.

Self-willed and indomitable, Elizabeth hid an aching heart. She might coquette with Henry Carey[1] and other young courtiers "all in election at court who shall set the best legge foremost," but she could not deceive herself into loving them. Essex alone possessed the power to give her happiness, and of his indifference she could no longer doubt. Stung both in her pride and love, she grieved with an intensity of suffering that robbed life of all savour.

In anger at the Queen's continued obstinacy, Essex declared "her conditions were as crooked as her carcas," and talebearers carried the words to Court. Cut to the quick was Elizabeth that Essex, the one person in the world she loved, should have called in question her incomparable beauty. The very depth of her affection

[1] Son of Sir Edward Carey and "Katherine Knevett." Knighted by Essex in Ireland, created Viscount Falkland. Was father of Lucius Carey, 2nd Lord Falkland, the famous cavalier slain at Newbury.

made forgiveness impossible: to have him back at Court would but be to torture herself; things could never be the same again; therefore it was better that he should remain in disgrace.

Elizabeth's own unhappiness quickened her sympathies towards those in trouble, and when her old friend "Katherine Knevett" (Lady Paget-Carey), lost one of her daughters, the Queen wrote at once to comfort her.

"Call to mind good Kate, how hardly we Princes can brook of crossing of our commands; how yreful wyll the heist power (you may be sure) when murmurings shall be made of his pleasingst will? Let nature therefore not hurt herself, but give plase to the giver. Though this lesson from a serly vicar, yet it is sent from a loving soveraine."[1]

The young Maids of Honour, clad in white and silver, grouped themselves round the Queen to form a dainty background as their mothers and grandmothers had done before them; but unlike the earlier Maids of Honour they were the attendants not companions of their mistress. She might share in their amusements, but no bridge could span the disparity between old age and early teens. As the Queen walked about the Palace grounds, where busy gardeners in never-ending labour plied their besoms against the rusted autumn leaves, falling in rustling showers from copper-tinted trees, the girls followed demurely in her wake. Their thoughts were of the future and their own love affairs; Elizabeth's of the past and her disgraced favourite.

[1] Nichols's *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth.*

The Earl of Essex, who had at first professed deep penitence, began to lose patience. When he realized the astonishing fact that he had lost his hold on the Queen, he shifted "from sorrowe and repentance to rage and rebellion." Then were there plotters at Essex house; desperate men with wild schemes to seize the Queen and force her to do their will.

On Sunday, February 8th, came exciting news from the city; my Lords of Essex and Southampton had sallied out into the streets of London with their followers to raise a rebellion against Her Majesty. Lord Chief Justice Popham, the Earl of Worcester, and Sir William Knollys, having gone to Essex House to investigate matters, had been taken prisoners and were now locked up under guard of the rebels.

Consternation reigned at Whitehall lest the insurgents should arrive to storm the Palace. Carts and coaches were placed as barricades across the road leading to Charing Cross; courtiers drew their swords in readiness, reinforced by the citizens of Westminster, who came hurrying to the defence of their Queen. Amidst all the excitement, Elizabeth retained her wonted courage, even suggesting going out in person to meet the rebels, declaring the very sight of her would be sufficient to disperse them. This idea did not commend itself to the ladies who would have been obliged to accompany her, so that they were greatly relieved when word came that the rebellion had failed and the ringleaders been secured.

The Queen's outward calm proved but the veneer of intense emotion, which showed itself directly the danger

was over. Sir John Harrington, seeing his godmother, described the state she was in:

"She is quite disfavoured and unattired, and these trouble her much. She disregardeth every costlie cover that cometh to the table, and eateth little but mancheat and succory pottage—every new message from the city doth disturb her, and she frowns on all her ladies. I had a sharp message from her brought by my Lord Buckhurst, namely this: 'Go tell that witty fellow, my godson, to get home; it is no season to fool here.' I liked this as little as she doth my knighthood, so took to my boots and returned to the plow in bad weather. I must not say much even by this trusty messenger; but the many evil plots and designs have overcome all her Highness' sweet temper. She walkes much in her privy chamber, and stamps with her feet at ill news, and thrusts her rusty sword at times in the Arras in great rage. My Lord Buckhurst is much with her, and few else since the city business; but the dangers are over, and yet she always keeps a sword by her table."[1]

The Earl of Essex was tried, convicted, and condemned to death. Elizabeth, called on to sign his death warrant, knew not what to do. More and more she missed the wise counsel of old Lord Burleigh, whose name she could not hear mentioned without tears. According to the laws of the country, Essex deserved to die: he had deserted the army in a time of grave national danger, and had raised the standard of rebellion. He had been disloyal to Elizabeth as a Queen, and false to her as a woman.

After miserable days, followed by sleepless nights,

[1] Sir John Harrington's *Nugæ Antiquæ*.

Elizabeth affixed her signature to the warrant for the Earl's execution. At the same time she kept in mind a reservation that, if in full token of his submission he sent the ring she had once given him for just such an emergency, she would keep her promise and pardon his life.

Throughout his disgrace Essex had nourished too much resentment to use this talisman, but when he heard the Queen had consented to his death he determined to do so. Watching the passers-by from his prison window, he presently called a bright-faced boy to be his messenger, bidding him hie with all speed to Whitehall and give the ring into the hands of Lady Scrope.

The boy fulfilled the trust in so much that he went to Whitehall, and succeeded in gaining admission on the plea that he had an important message to deliver to one of the Queen's ladies. Not knowing Lady Scrope by sight however, he gave the ring by mistake to her sister, the Countess of Nottingham.

"Kate Carey," so long keeper of the Queen's jewels, recognized the ring at once; she had seen it often on Elizabeth's finger, and later on the hand of the Earl of Essex. Guessing the significance of its return she consulted her husband before taking it to the Queen. The Lord Admiral put it in his pocket and told his wife to say nothing of the matter to anyone.

Elizabeth waiting for the ring hardened her heart, thinking in her bitterness that Essex would rather die than sue for pardon. They had pitted their strong wills against each other so often in the past, but this time she

would not be the one to give in, and on Wednesday, 25th of February, 1601, Essex was brought to the block.

Elizabeth gave no sign of what she felt, and seemingly life at Court went on just as usual, though those about the Queen clearly realized she was failing. No one would have ventured to voice such a remark, for the older she became the more resolute was Elizabeth not to admit any sign of physical weakness. She suffered sorely from gout, only no one dared to call it gout, so that the coronation ring which she had worn night and day since her accession had to be filed off her finger.

The cessation of progresses being spoken of as a sign of old age, caused Elizabeth to start on a progress immediately. A well-meaning but tactless courtier, representing that a coach was the most comfortable conveyance for one of her years, caused Elizabeth to ride on horseback. One day she rode ten miles and hunted by the way, being so weary on dismounting that she could scarcely stand and complained of the horse's bad paces. When thoroughly unwell, she went out for a walk lest anyone should comment on her ill health, and nearly every night she joined the Maids of Honour at their dances.

Death, the reaper, had plied his sickle freely among the ladies who in their youth had formed a white and silver background round the Queen, whose friends they had remained throughout their lives. Of the two "old Maids" only Mary Radcliffe, now Keeper of the Jewels, remained, for Catherine Howard had passed over to the great beyond.

"Kate Carey," best beloved of all, suffering from ague and chronic ill health, relinquished her place as lady of the bedchamber, and one day there came a message to say she lay dying at Arundel House, in the Strand. Elizabeth in great grief ordered her coach and hastened to say good-bye to her friend. With tear-dimmed eyes she saw the Countess lying white-faced in a great four-post bed. Rallying herself, Kate said she had something she must confess before she died. With gasping breath, she told her listening cousin how she had failed to deliver the ring which the Earl of Essex had sent to the Queen. Two years it had weighed on her mind, now on the threshold of death she begged forgiveness. Elizabeth, beside herself with rage and grief, seized the dying woman by the shoulder, crying as she shook her, "God may forgive you, but I never can."

The Queen returned to the Palace stupefied with grief. She could neither eat nor sleep, for the prop of her just resentment against Essex had been taken away. Back came the overwhelming love she had had for him, enshrining little acts of kindness, slurring over his faults. After all he had trusted her, and gone to his death thinking her unfaithful. Suddenly she seemed to have lost all interest in life, sitting sadly in a darkened room crying and bewailing Essex.

Lady Warwick, Lady Scrope and Lady Southwell, who were in waiting, thought a change would be beneficial, and suggested a remove to Richmond. This took place on a cold, raw day in January, when the Queen's heavy coach, followed by those of the household, rumbled over

Richmond Green, under the archway into the courtyard. Great fires blazed on the hearths; maidservants scurried along the corridors carrying long-handled warming-pans to take the chill from linen sheets; all the usual bustle upstairs and down, consequent when the Court returned.

Elizabeth grew no better; apathetically she sat all day on a pile of cushions, staring listlessly into space, with dim unseeing eyes. Once did she rouse herself and spread consternation among the ladies. The word went round that Her Majesty had commanded a mirror to be brought to her. Ladies of the bedchamber and Maids of Honour alike trembled, for the Queen had not seen her reflection for twenty years or more. Elizabeth took the glass so reluctantly brought to her, and saw not the beautiful reflection of her memory, but a lean, haggard, wrinkled old woman. As she touched the depths of self-humiliation vanity took wing, and she fell into bitter railing at those flatterers who had declared her charms in no wise abated.

Food and drink alike she refused, nor could the ladies persuade her to go to bed, till in despair Lady Southwell called in the assistance of the Lord Admiral, who prevailed where they had failed.

The Maids of Honour feared to go into the room with the strange, motionless figure; nor were their fears allayed by the discovery of a queen of hearts playing card nailed to the Queen's chair. None durst remove it, fearing witchcraft, but from that moment they despaired of their mistress's recovery.

Witchcraft, broken heart, or old age, on March 24th, 1603, the sands of Elizabeth's life glass were running low.

Lady Warwick, Lady Scrope and Lady Southwell watched by the royal bedside; ladies and Maids of Honour, assembled together in the Coffer Chamber, spent the night in tears; courtiers trod soft-footed in the hushed Palace. Robert Carey, firm in resolve to be the first to tell the King of Scots of his inheritance and knowing that efforts would be made to keep the Queen's death secret, had arranged with his sister, Philadelphia, for a signal. Slow passed the hours, but at chill dawn a lattice window opened softly, and Lady Scrope dropped a sapphire ring to her brother waiting below as a sign that Elizabeth, Queen of England, had quitted her earthly kingdom.

INDEX

A

Anjou, Alençon, Duke of, 100, 101, 116, 118, 121, 124, 128–137
Anjou, Henry, Duke of, 94, 98, 100
Arundell, Mistress, 42, 43, 65
Arundell, Robert, Sir, 42, 43
Ashley, Mrs., 7, 21, 52, 148
Aylmer, Bishop, 151

B

Bacon, Francis, Sir, 165, 211
Bacon, Lady, 253
Baden, Margravine of, 55
Barnes, Barnabe, 191
Bedford, Bridget, Countess of, 187, 188, 189
Bedford, Edward, Earl of, 193
Bedford, Francis, Earl of, 55
Berkley, Richard, Sir, 253
Bertie Peregrine ; see Willoughby, Lord
Bertie, Richard, 67, 140
Blount, Charles ; see Mountjoy, Lord
Blount, Christopher, 209, 264
Boonen, 61
Brackinbury, Richard, 88, 106, 107
Brandon, Frances, Lady, 18, 24
Bridges, Catherine, 76, 77, 78, 89, 106, 219
Bridges, Eleanor, 76, 106, 219
Bridges, Elizabeth, 219–223
Bridges, Grey, 222
Brydges ; see Bridges
Burleigh, Lady, 91, 253
Burleigh, Lord, 16, 34, 39, 46, 52, 53, 65, 66, 69, 70, 77, 89, 91, 92, 99, 113, 138, 140, 150, 165, 203, 204, 241, 242, 250, 273

C

Canterbury, Archbishop of, 90
Carew, George, Sir, 240
Carey, Ann, 257
Carey, Kate, 10, 16, 25, 40, 57, 59, 133, 200, 250, 274, 276
Carey, Philadelphia, 10, 57, 59, 201, 250, 274, 276, 278
Carey, Robert, 150, 278
Cavendish, Mistress, 153, 180
Cavendish, Thomas, 150, 153
Cecil, Ann, 77, 88, 89, 91, 92, 133, 140, 179, 187
Cecil, Robert, Sir, 173, 175, 180, 222, 231, 235, 246, 254, 255
Cecil, William ; see Burleigh, Lord
Challoner, Thomas, Sir, 16
Chandos, Lady, 219
Chandos, Dorothy, Lady, 220, 234, 263, 268, 269
Chandos, Giles, Lord, 219
Chandos, William, Lord, 222
Cobham, Lady, 18, 256

Cobham, Henry, Lord, 232, 244, 245, 255, 258, 259
Compton, Lord, 224, 225
Coningsby, Thomas, 83, 86, 87, 88, 107
Cordell, William, Sir, 110, 114, 116
Cumberland, George, Earl of, 201–203, 259

D

Dee, John, Dr., 8, 96, 97
Delves, George, 88
Denny, Edward, 144
Derby, Lady; see Vere, Elizabeth
Derby, William, Earl of, 204–8
Devereux, Dorothy, 124, 151, 233, 251
Devereux, Penelope, 104–5, 124, 125, 126, 127, 133, 143, 232, 251, 252, 266, 267
Dinghen, Mrs., 59
Drake, Francis, Sir, 160, 218
Drury, Lady; see Stafford, Elizabeth
Drury, William, Sir, 89, 115, 116
Dudley, Lady; see Howard, Mary
Dudley, Guildford, Lord, 16, 28
Dudley, Robert, Lord; see Leicester, Earl of
Dudley, Robert, 99, 180
Dyer, Edward, 103, 105, 137

E

Edgecumbe, Margaret, 134, 144
Edwards, Richard, 10, 55
Essex, Lady; see Walsingham, Francis
Essex, Robert, Earl of, 153, 167, 169, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 215, 216, 217, 218, 222, 233, 234, 235, 239–248, 250, 251, 252, 253, 265, 266, 270, 272, 273, 274, 275
Essex, Walter, Earl of, 41, 104

F

Fénelon, de la Mothe, 95, 100, 101
Feria, Count de, 17
Fitton, Edward, Sir, 160, 161, 262, 269
Fitton, Mary, 257, 260, 262–69
Fortescue, John, Sir, 242
Frobisher, Martin, 154, 161

G

Gascoigne, George, 77
Gorges, Arthur, 148, 150
Greene, Robert, 79
Gresham, Thomas, 70, 72, 73, 74
Greville, Fulke, 103, 105, 137, 211
Grey, Arthur, Lord, 56, 63
Grey, Catherine, Lady, 8, 16–24, 26–32, 33, 41, 51, 65, 69, 107
Grey, Jane, Lady, 8, 9, 10, 16, 19, 30
Grey, John, Lord, 32
Grey, Mary, Lady, 8, 24, 27, 63–71, 72

H

Harding, Mary, 190, 192, 193, 194
Harvey, Edmund, 37, 38

Harvey, Gabriel, 83, 103
Harvey, Isabella, 37, 38
Harrington, John, Sir, 148, 247, 273
Hastings, Elizabeth, Lady, 76, 88, 89
Hatton, Christopher, Sir, 55, 85, 87, 130, 140, 153, 187
Hawkins, John, Sir, 161
Hawtry, Edward, 66, 67
Henry VIII, 30, 117, 240, 257
Herbert, Lord; see Worcester, Earl of
Herbert, Lord; see Pembroke, Earl of
Herbert, Henry, Lord, 257, 259
Hertford, Edward, Earl of, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 29, 31, 32, 107, 143, 176–86
Hertford, Lady; see Howard, Frances
Holcroft, Isabel, 77, 88, 90, 187, 262
Holcroft, Julyan, Lady, 90
Howard, Catherine, 76, 179, 187, 201, 275
Howard, Charles, Lord; see Nottingham, Earl of
Howard, Elizabeth, 132, 134, 144, 250, 276, 277
Howard, Frances, 76, 83, 86, 87, 88, 98, 107, 132, 134, 143, 176–86
Howard, Lady; see Carey, Kate
Howard, Mary, 10, 76, 83, 89, 90
Howard, Mary, Lady, 182, 192, 212–16
Hunsdon, Lord, 49, 196, 197
Huntingdon, Countess of, 144, 145
Huntingdon, Earl of, 126

J

Jonson, Ben, 249

K

Keyes, Sergeant, 12, 20, 63, 65, 70
Kildare, Frances, Countess of, 232, 244, 255, 258
Knevett, Katherine, 10, 16, 58, 59, 133, 180, 201, 257, 270, 271
Knollys, Cecilia, 10, 59, 200, 233
Knollys, Francis, Sir, 13, 39
Knollys, Henry, 55
Knollys, Lettice, 10, 16, 41, 53, 104, 122, 123, 124, 129, 143, 166, 209, 210, 233, 234, 235, 241, 252
Knollys, William, Sir, 137, 217, 220, 233, 234, 240, 242, 262–69, 272

L

Lee, Henry, Sir, 10, 85, 87, 135, 201, 202, 203
Leicester, Robert, Earl of, 12, 25, 28, 29, 48, 51, 52, 53, 56, 57, 97, 98, 99, 104, 108, 118, 120, 122, 123, 137, 143, 145, 153, 163, 165, 166, 167, 209, 239
Leighton, Lady; see Knollys, Cecilia

Leighton, Thomas, Sir, 55
Lister, Charles, 221, 222

M

Manners, Bridget, Lady, 182, 187–198, 233
Manners, Roger, 189, 193, 194, 195
Marlowe, Christopher, 149, 169
Mary, Queen of England, 7, 136, 138
Mary, Queen of Scots, 9, 17, 49, 50, 51, 52, 70, 92, 143, 256
Medici, Catherine de, 94, 95, 100, 101
Melville, James, Sir, 48, 49, 50
Mendoza, Bernardino, 159
Mildmay, Thomas, 58
Mildmay, Walter, Sir, 58
Montagu, Mrs., 40
Mountjoy, Lord, 210, 211, 216, 252, 266, 267

N

Newdigate, Ann, Lady, 262, 263, 264, 268, 269
Norfolk, Duke of, 92
North, Roger, Lord, 79, 117, 118
Northumberland, Earl of, 192, 204, 233
Nottingham, Charles Howard, Earl of, 58, 85, 87, 137, 161, 174, 240, 250, 256, 267, 274, 277
Nottingham, Countess of; see Carey, Kate

O

O'Neil, Shan, 34, 35, 36, 58
Onslowe, Cordall, 257
Oxford, Countess of; see Cecil, Ann
Oxford, Countess of; see Trentham, Elizabeth
Oxford, Edward, Earl of, 57, 83, 84, 85, 87, 88, 89, 91, 118, 124, 125, 126, 138, 139, 140, 180, 187, 203

P

Paget, Lord, 58
Paget-Carey; see Knevett, Katherine
Parry, Blanche, 7, 8, 39, 52, 64, 71, 96, 132, 133, 136, 179
Pembroke, Countess of; see Sidney Mary
Pembroke, Henry, Earl of, 16, 56, 63, 108, 267
Pembroke, William, Earl of, 259, 267, 268
Perrot, Lady; see Devereux, Dorothy
Perrot, Thomas, 150, 151
Petre, William, Sir, 32
Philip, King of Spain, 16, 136, 159, 160
Pilkington, James, 72
Popham, Lord Chief Justice, 272

R

Radcliffe, Alexander, Sir, 232, 244 245, 248

Radcliffe, Frances, Lady, 34, 35, 36, 37, 52, 58
Radcliffe, Humphrey, Sir, 37, 38, 41
Radcliffe, Margaret, 232, 244, 245, 248, 249, 250, 255, 257
Radcliffe, Mary, 37, 38, 41, 42, 52, 134, 136, 179, 187, 190, 195, 201, 250, 275
Raleigh, Walter, Sir, 137, 148, 150, 151, 152, 153, 167–175, 211, 231, 244, 246
Ratcliffe; see Radcliffe
Rich, Lady; see Devereux, Penelope
Rich, Lord, 126, 127, 143
Russell, Ann (Countess of Warwick), 10, 16, 45, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 133, 250, 261, 276, 278
Russell, Ann (Lady Herbert), 219, 248, 253, 254–261
Russell, Elizabeth, 219, 223, 254–261
Russell, John, Lord, 254
Russell, Lady, 219, 253–261
Rutland, Edward, Earl of, 57, 87, 88, 90, 187, 219
Rutland, Elizabeth, Countess of, 187, 188, 189, 191, 192, 194, 195, 196, 197
Rutland, Isabel, Countess of; see Holcroft, Isabel
Rutland, Roger, Earl of, 190, 259

S

Sandes, Lady; see Bridges, Catherine
Sandes, Lord, 89
Scrope, Lady; see Carey, Philadelphia
Scrope, Lord, 57
Scudamore, James, 83, 107
Scudamore, Mrs. and Lady; see Shelton, Mary
Seintlow, Lady, 27, 29, 30
Seymour, Jane, Lady, 9, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 30, 41, 261
Shakespeare, William, 205, 230
Sheffield, Douglas, Lady, 98, 99, 104
Shelton, Mary, 76, 107, 131, 154, 201, 237, 238, 254
Shirley, Thomas, Sir, 180
Shirley, Thomas, 150, 180, 181
Shrewsbuty, Gilbert, Earl of; see Talbot, Lord
Sidney, Henry, Sir, 101, 102, 108
Sidney, Mary, Lady, 101, 102, 108, 109
Sidney, Mary, 102, 103, 104, 107, 126, 133, 146, 267
Sidney, Philip, Sir, 89, 103, 104, 105, 106, 124, 125, 126, 127, 137, 145, 146, 147, 211, 217, 232, 266
Simier, Monsieur, 121, 122, 124
Somerset, Anne, Duchess of, 17, 32
Southampton, Countess of; see Vernon, Elizabeth

Southampton, Henry, Earl of, 193, 204, 229–232, 235, 236, 237, 238, 244, 272
Southwell, Elizabeth, 250, 257
Southwell, Lady; see Howard, Elizabeth
Southwell, Robert, Sir, 144, 161
Southwell, Thomas, 89, 90, 144
Spencer, Elizabeth, 223–228
Spencer, John, Sir, 223, 224, 225
Spenser, Edmund, 103, 154, 167, 168, 169, 174
Spring, William, Sir, 114
Stafford, Elizabeth, 76, 89, 115, 116
Stokes, Adrian, 19, 71
Stubbes, John, 129, 130, 142, 144, 145
Suffolk, Katherine, Duchess of, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 138, 140, 141
Sussex, Thomas, Earl of, 34, 35, 36, 37, 52, 53, 58, 117, 118, 140
Sweden, Eric, King of, 33, 34, 55

T

Talbot, Gilbert, Lord, 98, 212
Tarlton, Richard, 80, 81
Thompson, Mrs., 80
Throckmorton, Elizabeth, 132, 134, 170–175
Throckmorton, Lady, 71
Throckmorton, Nicholas, Sir, 25, 52, 71
Tilney, Edward, 119, 120
Trentham, Elizabeth, 134, 180
Tyrrwhit, Robert, 194, 198

V

Vavasour, Ann, 182, 203
Vavasour, Frances, 180, 182
Vere, Elizabeth, Lady, 180, 182, 187, 203–208, 233
Vere, Mary, Lady, 107, 132, 138–147
Vernon, Elizabeth, 204, 231, 232, 235, 236, 237, 238, 251, 252

W

Walsingham, Frances, 127, 211, 251
Walsingham, Francis, Sir, 127, 129
Warner, Edward, Sir, 29, 30, 31
Warwick, Ambrose, Earl of Warwick, 39, 54, 55, 57, 120
Warwick, Countess of; see Russell, Ann
Wharton, Lord, 193, 194
Willoughby, Ambrose, 231
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord, 69, 137, 138–147
Willoughby, Lady; see Vere, Mary
Windsor, Lord, 25
Worcester, Countess of; see Hastings, Elizabeth
Worcester, Earl of, 83, 89, 272

BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM CENTRAL
JUL 1929